



## NEWS

in brief

### Ministry denies Ben-Elissar shunned by French

Reports that the French authorities messaged the Foreign Ministry asking that Ambassador Eliahu Ben-Elissar not take over as Israel's envoy to France were unequivocally denied yesterday by Deputy Director-General Colene Avital.

"A rumor to that effect was reported by the TV news and there was a similar story beforehand in the Paris daily Liberation," Avital said. She dismissed both accounts as being totally untrue, stating that she has not received any communication from French officials with regard to Ben-Elissar's next diplomatic assignment.

Jay Bushinsky

### Two stabbed in Jerusalem

A woman suffered mild wounds after being stabbed in Jerusalem Ramot Eshkol neighborhood last night.

In a separate incident yesterday, paramedics called to the scene of a car accident on a Jerusalem road found an unidentified man who had been stabbed inside the car. The man was taken to Hadassah Hospital for treatment. Jerusalem police spokeswoman Michal Tsimberg said. Police later said the two incidents were unrelated and were criminally motivated.

AP

### Hanegbi holds meeting on Mossad bill

Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi conferred yesterday with Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein, State Attorney Edna Arbel, and an army official to discuss drafting a bill delineating the powers of the Mossad.

At the meeting, it was reportedly decided to prepare a preliminary draft of the bill through consultations with relevant parties and the examination of similar legislation in other countries. *Itim*

### Israel, Jordan to set up joint industrial zones

Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky held talks on trade issues with his Jordanian counterpart, Hani Mulki, in Petra yesterday.

The two plan to soon hold a meeting with Palestinian Authority officials.

They also decided to set up more industrial zones for joint ventures - at the border near Beit She'an and in the Akaba-Eilat area - as a result of the success of the Irbid industrial area.

It was decided to ask the US to also extend free-trade status to goods produced jointly by Israel and Jordan to the new areas.

Exports to Jordan in the first quarter were up 73% to \$6.3 million from \$3.6m. last year. Imports totaled \$3.1m. compared with \$2.5m. in last year's first quarter, a rise of 24%.

Nina Gilbert

### Vanunu to appeal refusal of parole

Mordechai Vanunu's lawyer, Avigdor Feldman, said he would appeal yesterday's decision by the parole board to deny Vanunu's request for an early release after he had completed two-thirds of his 18-year prison sentence.

Vanunu was convicted of treason after revealing details about Israel's nuclear capability to London's Sunday Times.

The three-man board, headed by retired district judge Amiram Danenberg, ruled that Vanunu, 42, would not be released because there was still "a substantial and concrete concern that the security of the state and its foreign relations would be damaged" and that this would occur with "a high degree of probability."

Dan Izenberg

# Milo popular among non-religious

By MICHAEL YUDELMAN

Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo's announcement yesterday that he is stepping down from the mayoral race to run for prime minister took his Tel Aviv constituents by complete surprise.

Recent opinion polls have suggested Milo is so popular he could win the Tel Aviv race again with one hand tied behind his back. Many city residents assumed he reciprocated their feelings and would seek at least one more term.

Milo may not have left a lasting mark on the face of Tel Aviv during his short term - few can name a single achievement of his - but his political views blend easily with the

city's famous liberal, yuppie climate. This means a lot to Tel Avivians.

"He arrived a straight Likudnik and became a fighter for civil rights, freedom from religious coercion, and peace with the Palestinians," said Meir Levkov. "Tel Aviv does that to people."

Tel Avivians in the street yesterday applauded Milo for his stand against religious coercion. Most were willing to brush aside his shortcomings as mayor. Milo's spirited attack on the religious attempt to "ban" the Batsheva Dance Company's performance at the Jubilee Bells program, scored big points for him in Tel Aviv.

"After the cancellation of a jubilee performance by the troupe that won an Israel

Prize, not a word of protest have we heard from the prime minister or the Labor leader," Shoshana Dafni said. "Milo emerged at that moment as the only real national leader. It made me proud to have him as mayor."

"Maybe he didn't do much for Tel Aviv, but his determination to stop the haredim closing the city down on Shabbat is what matters most to me," Miriam Golan said.

"The city is a shambles, there's never any parking, and the streets are dirty," Zippy Weisman said. "But the feeling of freedom you get here, compared to places like Jerusalem for instance, is worth much more than all that. I agree with Milo's opposition to religious coercion and his changing the

city bylaws so that businesses can be open on weekends."

"I don't know if it's the mayor's fault, but the traffic is always clogged, and parked cars completely block the sidewalks," agreed Avraham Eizenberg. "I don't see what Milo's done for Tel Aviv since his election. But then, I don't see anyone better, either."

"The situation of Jaffa Arabs hasn't improved at all," said an Arab resident of the port town.

"I didn't even know Tel Aviv had a mayor," said a businessman who used to live in the city's southern Florentine quarter. "Everything runs only by some chaotic inertia, but nothing ever improves."

## Baker: US should be tougher in peace talks

By HILIEL KUTTLER

WASHINGTON - Saying the administration has been rendered "paralyzed" and "impotent" by political considerations, former US secretary of state James Baker yesterday urged the US to muster the courage to state publicly what it expects Israel to cede in the next redeployment.

Doing so should not be considered a danger to American-Israeli relations, which Baker said must always remain strong.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright would like to be "far more forward-leaning" in the peace process than she is able to be, he maintained.

"I happen to think that both here in the US and in Israel - and I can say this today because I'm out of politics - that somehow we are letting politics dominate policy. We are letting it drive policy to a far greater extent than it has before," Baker told a forum organized by *Middle East Insight* magazine, that included the ambassadors from Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt, and representatives from the Israeli Embassy.

Asked about the two-year cessation of Israel's talks with Syria and Lebanon, Baker said that in early 1995, then-premier Yitzhak Rabin told him that "he was prepared to leave the Golan."

On the Israeli-Palestinian stalemate, Washington should "stand up" and "acknowledge" that it sees the situation "a little differently" than Jerusalem, but to do so in a fair way that also points out the Palestinians' obligations, Baker added.

He admitted that that "is not a task that comes naturally" to President Bill Clinton or his administration, but that it would "rekindle" the Madrid process Baker inaugurated in 1991.

As a second-term president who can't run for re-election, Clinton could "really get some things accomplished," but would have to "expend political capital" in the process, Baker said.

"One very good place to start would be to say that it is the view of the honest broker ... that there ought to be a 13.1 percent withdrawal. Everybody knows that that's the American view. It's been leaked to the press, but we're afraid to even confirm it [even] when there are some indications that the Israeli government indeed is ready to go to 11%. So what have we come to if we're going to let politics drive policy?" he said.

"The fact of the matter is that the US today, in my view, is not doing what we historically must do ... if there's going to be progress toward peace in the Middle East."

### CORRECTION

The photograph of the German chief of staff at Yad Vashem on Page 2 of yesterday's paper was taken by Isaac Harari.

## LONDON

Continued from Page 1

But Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said that, "Mr. Netanyahu presented nothing whatsoever" in his talks with Albright, and was simply drawing out the process.

None of the officials cited specific progress in the talks, which originally were not scheduled to include face-to-face discussions between Netanyahu and Arafat.

The two first met separately with British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who is hosting the meetings, and then in turn with Albright.

Netanyahu described his first meeting with Albright as "positive, constructive and comprehensive," but he declined to be drawn on the specifics of their discussions.

Both Israelis and Palestinians have suffered greatly from terrorism and war, he said. "It's time to end the misery."

Netanyahu said it should be possible to arrange a face-to-face meeting with Arafat, given that they are in the same city, but Arafat is understood to have ruled out such an encounter unless there is a breakthrough.

A senior government source said the talks between Netanyahu and Albright had focused on an Israeli proposal for changing the terms of the debate and creating a new "conceptual framework" in which the size and scope of the Israeli redeployment would be only one of many issues to be negotiated.

According to the source, Israel is seeking to create a "comprehensive menu" of subjects for negotiation, which would include such issues as the amendment of the Palestinian Covenant, verifiable security arrangements, reciprocity, as well as the Gaza seaport and airport, the



US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright greets Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in London yesterday. (Reuters)

"safe-passage" route and the Kami industrial zone. Never before, said the source, had Israeli officials spoken in such depth about specific concerns over the issues of security and reciprocity.

It is not known whether Albright was formally told of the heavily leaked decision to increase the scope of Israel's redeployment from 9% to 11%, but not to the reported 13.1% suggested by the US and agreed to by the Palestinians.

He rejected suggestions that Arafat is too weak and vulnerable to deal effectively with security threats to Israel from Palestinian-controlled areas. And he warned that Arafat's threat to make a unilateral declaration of

independence would be a mistake, because Israel could - and would - take unilateral action of its own.

Nabil Shaath, a key adviser to Arafat, told reporters there was no early sign of progress. "There is nothing I can report [that is] really substantive, except that we have the feeling the American team, led by Albright, is doing their best to achieve some progress, and that progress has not been achieved."

State Department spokesman James Rubin said it had still not been decided whether to publish the US proposals, whose central elements are thought to include the 13.1% redeployment, a "time-out" on settlement activity, and security arrangements.

## Elbit subsidiary wins deal for F-22

By STEVE RODAN

Vision Systems International (VSI), a San Jose, Calif. subsidiary of Elbit Systems Ltd., Haifa, has received a contract from Lockheed Martin Aeronautical Systems Co. for the initial integration of the joint helmet mounted cueing systems (JHMCS) into the US Air Force F-22 Raptor. Elbit executives said yesterday.

Defense executives said the VSI deal is the first time an Israeli company has won a contract for work on the F-22. The helmet-mounted

cueing system provides visual information to the pilot based on the position and orientation of his head.

Elbit executives did not disclose the size of the deal, but industry sources said the potential amounts to tens of millions of dollars.

VSI is developing the system under separate contract for use in other US Air Force front line fighter aircraft, such as the F-15, F-16, and F/A-18. The JHMCS program is on schedule for its first flight trial during the fourth quarter of 1998, with initial production to

begin in 2000.

Elbit executives said that VSI expects integration into additional platforms to follow the initial development program and the potential for full production to be about 4,000 systems for the US.

"We are pleased to have earned a position on the very advanced Raptor weapons system," VSI president Yoram Shmueli said.

VSI is jointly owned by Elbit and Kaiser Aerospace and Electronics Corp., Foster City, California, and EPW (Elbit Fort Worth), Fort Worth, Texas.

## Swiss bank paying US Holocaust claimant

By MARILYN HENRY

In what is believed to be the first settlement in the US of a Holocaust-era claim against a Swiss bank, Credit Suisse was scheduled yesterday to pay compensation to the daughter of a Nazi victim.

Estelle Sapir, whose father, a Warsaw banker, was killed in Majdanek, was to sign the agreement in New York with Credit Suisse for an undisclosed sum. Sources said Sapir, 71, would receive about \$500,000.

Credit Suisse said previously that it could find no record of her

father's account.

Sapir, who lives in Queens, New York, was one of dozens of claimants in separate class-actions suits that have been filed in federal court in New York seeking compensation from the banks, which are accused of hoarding Jewish assets.

Word of the Sapir settlement first became public a number of weeks ago, but the final announcement was delayed by a dispute over attorneys' fees, sources said. There also was some concern that the strength of the class-action suits might be diluted if survivors and

heirs made individual deals with the banks.

Sapir was one of the most prominent of the early claimants. When she appeared at a 1996 hearing of the Senate Banking Committee, she said that when she went to the Credit Suisse branch in Geneva in 1947, with a 1938 deposit slip, a banker told her that she would have to produce a death certificate for her father.

In a statement that later was widely repeated, Sapir recounted that she asked the banker: "You want me to get it from Hitler, from Himmler?"

just as soon forget about it. Why it's so I really don't know.

"Some think it started with Ben-Gurion, who was happy to have all the help, but didn't want it known generally that he needed outside help. It made a better local story to show that the Israelis did it themselves despite all the hardships. The Israelis did a great job, but the volunteers helped."

### MAHAL

Continued from Page 1

Jules Doneson, from Detroit, said his biggest disappointment was that every main speaker, including mayors and generals, either couldn't make their meeting, or rushed out after a few words.

"We don't need a brass band

playing for us, we don't need a red carpet laid out for us, all we ask for is some recognition, real recognition. When you say 'All I have is a minute, or the main guy isn't here, this is not recognition, they're running away from us.'"

"There's been no recognition from the government," said 76-year-old Shlomo, from the US. "But the Israeli government would

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### Pitching the Peace Tent

Members of the Peace Tent group demonstrate opposite the prime minister's residence in Jerusalem yesterday in support of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's negotiation efforts in London. Some of the protesters sported blue and white lapel ribbons "to remind everybody - what some people tend to forget - where we belong," said Prof. Dan Jacobson of Tel Aviv University, one of the organizers. "Sometimes the right wing, the hawks, say they are the national camp," he added, "but we belong to the same nation and the same national camp."

(Text: Eli Wohlgelander; photo: Brian Hender)

## Suissa: Plans exist to build up TA, Beersheba, Haifa metropolitan areas

By LIAT COLLINS

Interior Minister Eli Suissa said yesterday that in addition to plans for a Greater Jerusalem area, there are similar proposals for a metropolitan area around Tel Aviv, Beersheba and Haifa.

The discussions on Beersheba are scheduled to be heard today at the regional planning and construction committee.

Suissa said Abu Ghosh and Tel Sheva are not included in the annexation plans for Jerusalem. He also said there is no need to annex Mevasseret Zion, as within a few years it would naturally join the capital.

Suissa met yesterday with the Knesset Lobby for Jerusalem, co-chaired by MKs Ophir Pines (Labor) and Ruby Rivlin (Likud) and local residents.

The opposition to the annexation of areas west of Jerusalem crossed party lines and included MKs from Meretz (Naomi Chazan) to Moledet (Rehavim Ze'evi and Benny Elon).

Pines, speaking on behalf of the rest of the lobby, said however they did not completely rule out the idea of an umbrella authority over several areas.

MK Emanuel Zissman (Third Way) this week submitted a bill which would allow for the establishment of an umbrella metropolitan authority while allowing each

town to preserve a measure of independence.

Suissa said that annexing areas did not necessarily mean changing their nature.

This, however, was met with skepticism by the MKs and local residents.

He said it was in Jerusalem's interests to ensure that no large cities emerged in the vicinity to detract from it and said he would oppose any proposal to turn Tsur Hadassah into a town or significantly increase the size of Mevasseret Zion.

He said the cities of Modi'in and Beit Shemesh had had a negative impact on Jerusalem.

MK Nissim Dahan (Shas) noted that haredi families are also leaving Jerusalem and warned against turning the issue into a religious-secular conflict based on the fear of halitization of the proposed annexed areas.

Apart from the concerns of local residents that the rural lifestyle they had chosen would end with annexation, environmentalists at the meeting also raised objections to the proposals.

Yoav Sagi, chairman of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, said that apart from the threat to the green areas around Jerusalem which help define its nature and are an environmental asset, he feared that

the annexation would turn into an example of the use of legislation

to bypass existing planning laws and procedure.

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## HEBREW PRESS REVIEW

By ORLY AHARONI

### For whom the bells toll

The row that had erupted over the Jubilee Bells event after the BatSheva Dance Company refused to perform led the Hebrew press to declare its fear of a "culture war" between the religious and secular communities.

"The Israeli culture war has already begun," writes Yediot Aharonot's Nahum Bamea, who states that the war is not an artistic but a political one.

"The war is over power, over areas of control. The haredim, a rising force in Israeli politics, are trying to test the boundaries," he writes.

Rami Sadan in Ma'ariv states that the inclusion of the BatSheva dance would have been a mistake, writing "A performance that mocks those who wear traditional clothes, that laughs at 'one God,' has no place in a national event."

Yaron London in Yediot feels that both sides' claims are justified, because each sees the matter from its own unique point of view. Therefore, he adds there is a need to avoid such clashes and lays the blame for the controversy on Doron Shmueli, the head of the Jubilee Association.

"It is still not known who will be the next chief of general staff, but it is already clear that the main loser in this competition will be Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai," claims Yediot's Ron Ben-Yishai.

"The public knows that he prefers Mofaz, but if that's his choice, Mordechai will be accused of personal vengeance...if he chooses Vilna he will be viewed as someone who surrenders to pressure."

Ma'ariv's Amnon Dankner rejects the common opinion that Vilna is the best choice among the two. He refers to Mofaz's accelerated advancement and claims that it is due to his exceptional talent.

"We should wish Mofaz that the characteristics that had led him on the accelerated road to advancement be displayed where crucial: at the top of the pyramid."

Ma'ariv's Ofer Shelah states that the least important thing this week is who will be the next chief of staff.

The message conveyed to officers by the politicians' conduct is that the most important things are "the patronage of the man on top, the contacts with the press and the willingness to undergo maximum humiliation to get the job."

### The war of the generals

Delaying the decision on the next IDF chief of general staff, intensified speculation about who will be chosen, Maj.-Gen. Matan Vilna or Maj.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz.

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# TA officials arrested for corruption

Municipal workers, contractor accused of bribe-taking, breach of trust

Two Tel Aviv municipal officials and a contractor were remanded for 24 hours yesterday on suspicion of bribery.

The three deny the charges. Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court remanded Dan Pe'er, head of the Tel Aviv Road Maintenance Department, and Mili Yanko-Ziegler, head of the Tel Aviv Sewerage Department, on suspicion of accepting bribes and breach of trust by a public official.

Contractor Peretz Shaposhnik, 52, of Hadera, was remanded on suspicion of bribing Pe'er and Yanko-Ziegler to manipulate municipal guidelines for awarding contracts in his favor.

Chief Supt. Aryeh Edelman claimed that Shaposhnik also bribed other municipal officials.

Police had asked that the suspects be remanded for eight days. Police appealed the magistrate's court's decision to remand the suspects for only one day, but the Tel Aviv District Court rejected the appeal.

An investigation by Tel Aviv Controller Arye Segelson prompted the Tel Aviv fraud squad to investigate the three.

A Sewerage Department employee also was arrested yesterday on suspicion of coordinating between Yanko-Ziegler and Shaposhnik.

Police said they expect to make more arrests in coming days.

According to the charge sheet, Shaposhnik gave Pe'er, 63, of Bat Yam, and Yanko-Ziegler, 65, of Bat Yam, about NIS 2,000 in cash several times and electron-



Dan Pe'er, flanked by Mili Yanko-Ziegler and Peretz Shaposhnik, is held before appearing in court yesterday. (Ilan Ossendryver/Israel Sam)

ic appliances such as telephones, stereos, and video cameras.

In exchange, Pe'er and Yanko-Ziegler allegedly gave

Shaposhnik preference for con-

tracts, ignored guidelines for awarding contracts, and overpaid him for his work. (Ilan)

## Levy: Rabin 'photo' should serve as warning

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN

The distribution of a photomontage of the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin in the nude should serve as a warning against Israel being dragged into a Kulturkampf, Education Minister Yitzhak Levy said yesterday.

Levy spoke after a meeting in his office with artists to discuss the recent uproar over the Batsheva Dance Company's refusal to appear in the *Jubilee Bells* performance on Independence Day.

Calling the distribution of the photomontage "my greatest fear," Levy said. "I am very much afraid that the talk about a Kulturkampf will, God forbid, draw us into things that are far from being cultured or humane. This dastardly act lights a warning light and demands that we all act responsibly and with restraint, without covering up the bitterness of the argument or the points of disagreement."

Levy repeated that there is not and will not be censorship of the arts in Israel, and that no one has any intention of making budget cuts to increase cultural influence. He added that artistic freedom is a fundamental basis of a democratic, pluralistic state, and therefore it is the audience, and not the government, which will judge the performances.

Among those participating in the meeting were Yossi Yizraeli,

Tzipi Pines, Ofra Hoenig and Muli Shapira. Shapira Levy, chairman of the Israel Artists Association, apologized for his absence and is to meet with Levy soon to plan another similar meeting to take place in two weeks.

Director-General Ben Zion Dail and Culture Authority Director Micha Yainon called on artists and heads of institutions, along with the public and politicians, to help calm down the situation. They stressed that the Batsheva performance was not organized by the ministry, so there was no reason to accuse it of censorship.

Representatives of the artists who spoke, according to a ministry spokesman, said they also have red lines, and that the dance groups, theaters, symphonies and other cultural institutions are the equivalent of their synagogues. The *Jubilee Bells* incident was just another in a chain of events they said threaten freedom of speech and creativity.

"Most of us are individualists and our great fear of being hurt unified us and led to a great outcry. One could compare our protest to those of observant people protesting that their Sabbath is being desecrated," they said.

Both sides agreed that the *Jubilee Bells* incident could have been avoided, and that politicians should not interfere in matters of culture.

## Israel Cancer Association warns of melanoma risk

By JUDY SIEGEL

Barbers and hairdressers should examine the scalps of their customers for moles and alert them to warning signs of melanoma, the Israel Cancer Association (ICA) said yesterday.

In order to minimize sun damage, the Center for Local Authorities will urge municipalities and local councils to erect protective areas—especially in kindergarten and school yards—and plant trees that provide shade from the hot sun.

The ICA is organizing its annual campaign for free early detection of skin cancer at 140 community health fund and hospital clinics around the country on Thursday and Friday.

Details about the free skin

checks will be published in the media. More information can be obtained from the ICA's Telemedia number at 03-5717888.

Increased awareness of the health dangers of ultra-violet rays of the sun have reduced the number of melanoma cases diagnosed at a late, fatal stage.

The ICA said that over 600 new melanoma patients are identified here each year. But now 36.7% of them are diagnosed at an early stage when the chances of a cure reach 90%, it said. In 1990, the early-detection rate was only 16.4%.

The ICA credits its skin cancer awareness campaigns and the media for making the public aware of the harm caused by exposure to the sun. Although the number of new melanoma cases has remained

steady during the past couple of years, it is still too early to say if the upward trend of the last 30 years has been halted.

Melanoma is more common among women (13.1 per 100,000) than in men (12 per 100,000), according to ICA figures. Israeli-born residents suffer the highest rate (20 per 100,000), followed by immigrants from Europe and the Americas (15) and, way behind, immigrants from Asian and African countries (3) who have darker skin with pigments that provide more protection.

But the ICA noted that during the last three decades, the melanoma rate among Oriental Jews has increased as well. UV radiation also triggers the formation of cataracts in the eye, so UV-filtering sunglasses are recommended.

## MKs: Let Batsheva perform in Knesset

By LIAT COLLINS

The party whips of six factions yesterday signed a request to Speaker Dan Tichon that the Batsheva Dance Company be allowed to perform in the Knesset auditorium.

The request was initiated by Labor whip Elie Goldschmidt who was joined by Haim Oron (Meretz), Abdul Wahab Darawshe (Democratic Arab Party), Tamar Gozansky (Hadash), Roman Bronfman (Yisrael Ba'aliya), and Eliezer Zandberg (Tsomet).

Yesterday, Avraham Poraz (Shinui) submitted a bill calling for a separation between religion and state. A similar bill by Naomi Chazan (Meretz) is expected to come up for preliminary reading tomorrow.

In the letter to Tichon, the MKs wrote that the

invitation would act "to calm the public debate following the *Jubilee Bells* celebration," during which the dance group did not perform, citing religious coercion.

The MKs said that Batsheva's *Anaphasa* is "undoubtedly the most impressive performance in the history of dance in Israel and the group's reputation at home and abroad brings honor to Israel."

Under the Poraz and Chazan bills, it would be possible to hold civil weddings and divorces, for example, and cemeteries would be built for those who want a non-religious burial.

Poraz is also calling for the provision of religious facilities to be the responsibility of the local authorities and the abolition of religious councils.

The Labor faction yesterday discussed how to vote on Chazan's bill. The trend seems to be towards opposing it or allowing MKs to vote according to conscience.

"It is a bill which would increase the polarization during difficult times for the state," said Labor leader Ehud Barak.

Rafi Elul warned against "cutting off from the [Jewish] tradition," while Nissim Zivili said that in a cultural war "there are no winners, only losers. The country is not ripe for separation of religion from state."

Haim Ramon said support for such a bill would contradict the party platform.

MK Ophir Pines, however, said Labor should support the bill, in view of its own response to the *Jubilee Bells* affair and its call for military draft for haredim.

## Ministry to stop illegal Viagra sales

By JUDY SIEGEL

The Health Ministry has filed a police complaint against a business that has advertised the illegal sale of Viagra, the anti-impotence pill developed in the US. It also warned the public against buying the "miracle pill" on the black market or in stores not authorized to sell pharmaceuticals.

The blue pill, manufactured by Pfizer and recently approved for sale in the US by the Food and Drug Administration, will be available here by prescription only

in a few months. Promedico, which represents Pfizer in Israel, has applied for an import license from the Health Ministry, and there is apparently no reason for it to be rejected. The drug is not an aphrodisiac.

Advertisements have recently appeared in the Hebrew press offering the expensive pill—"in limited supplies"—via a phone number that is constantly busy. The company offers to dispatch three Viagra pills by messenger to any address, in exchange for NIS 320 plus NIS 40 handling. This is

three times the price in the US.

The ministry has not yet considered how to deal with the growing illicit Viagra market via the Internet, where customers pay by credit card and it is mailed to their homes. If the fact that the contents are drugs is not labelled on the package, the customs authorities are not likely to check it.

The health authorities also asked the Ministry of Industry and Trade to enforce the law regulating stores to prevent them from selling pharmaceuticals without a license and without supervision.

## Tel Aviv hoteliers deny charging world's top rates

By HAIM SHAPIRO

Israeli hoteliers were shocked yesterday by a report in *Yedioth Aharonot* that hotels in Tel Aviv had the highest rates in the world.

The paper was quoting the prestigious British weekly, *The Economist*, which said it was basing its survey on information provided by American Express.

According to a graph published in *The Economist*, rates in Tel Aviv were higher than those in such traditionally high-priced destinations as Hong Kong, Tokyo, London, Paris and Stockholm.

A perusal of the *Economist* survey indicated that what the magazine was actually talking about was corporate rates, the prices paid by

large companies, whose employees used many room nights a year.

Such companies are offered special prices by hotels all over the world. However, even then the Israeli hoteliers found it difficult to believe that their prices were higher.

"I know that our corporate rates are definitely not the highest in the world. We know that for sure," said Wendy Geri, director of public relations for the Tel Aviv Sheraton.

She explained that the hotel's marketing manager travelled abroad often for the hotel and actually paid the corporate rate, which was often higher than that which she herself had set.

Her views were echoed by Hotel Association deputy director Ya'acov Katz, who said he knew the prices of hotels in Europe and knew that they were often higher than those in Tel Aviv.

## ANALYSIS

Continued from Page 1

If Milo's move yesterday proves anything, it is that Barak was right on the money, but a critical failure of nerve led him to succumb to pressure from within his party and renege on the bargain with Milo.

Once the deal came unraveled, it became palpably clear what was in it for Milo. When Labor endorsed Milo, it offered him a safety net. When it withdrew it, Milo was left suspended over an abyss. He jumped sideways to avoid the mayoral race.

The Likud did then had not decided what to do about the Tel Aviv municipal contest. Milo was for months judged in the Likud as having for all intents and purposes quit the party, even if his official announcement only came yesterday. Rumors abounded that it might field ex-Democratic Movement for Change MK and insurance tycoon Shlomo Eliyahu against Milo.

Though Eliyahu is hardly a charismatic figure, he could hurt Milo just enough to make a difference—if Labor did not support him. With both large parties against him, Milo's lead might be trimmed enough to deprive him of a majority.

But even if Milo did not lose Tel Aviv, if he only failed to produce an impressive landslide in the

municipal race, his claim to be a potent vote-getter will have been battered, along with his future in the national arena. Milo had to avert the looming calamity. He did it in the only way he could.

This explains the curious timing, smack in mid-term. With two years till the prime ministerial election, Milo could find himself ignored and forgotten. Early elections seem far less likely now than they did six months ago, when Milo hoisted the banner of insurrection against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Logically, Milo could not have picked a worse time—unless he had no choice.

His only possible consolation is that he also took a vengeful swipe at Barak for not upholding the bargain between them. Barak sought to keep Milo out of the prime ministerial race. Milo struck back at Barak by entering that race—even if prematurely.

What happened between Milo and Barak in the past week was not foreseen, planned, or desired by either. It can constitute nothing but disaster for both. Milo might avoid losing face, but could find himself languishing in the political desert for two drawn-out years. Barak has maladroitly managed to turn a potential political spoiler into a declared contender more likely to hurt him than his major opponent.

It's been a nasty week for both.

## MILO

Continued from Page 1

Barak insisted he "is not worried at all. I don't think my chances are diminished by this, though if Milo runs for prime minister and if others do as well, there might have to be a second round. In that event, we are sure to win."

Others in his party did not share Barak's optimism. MK Uzi Baram judged that "there is every reason for Labor to be anxious. There is good reason to fear that Milo could bite into our support rather than into Netanyahu's."

Meretz leader Yossi Sarid shared Baram's concern.

"There is a good chance that what Milo did will actually strengthen the alliance of the Right and the haredi-religious groupings headed by Netanyahu. Milo may just assure Netanyahu of another term by weakening the moderate forces in the political arena," Sarid said.

Likud Knesset faction chairman Meir Sheetrit thinks Milo "gambled everything. His entire political career is on the line. If the

elections for prime minister are held on time, then Milo will have lost momentum. Two years in politics is an eternity. No one can tell what will happen."

NRP Knesset faction chairman Shmuryahu Ben-Tzur thanked "the Almighty for removing this punishment—Ronni Milo—from the backs of Tel Aviv residents."

But Milo had some supporters. MK Roman Bronfman (Yisrael Ba'aliya) congratulated Milo "for his courage and resolve to run independently. A centrist party is precisely what this country needs most urgently." MK Avraham Poraz (Shinui-Meretz) cheered. Milo's move and even suggested that "we might cooperate in the future."

Poraz has discussed this possibility with Milo in recent weeks.

Labor will decide in the coming days who it will field in Tel Aviv. Labor Secretary-General Ra'anan Cohen suggested the nomination to MK Ephraim Sneh, of Herzliya.

The Likud reportedly is planning its hopes on Shlomo Eliyahu, a former Democratic Movement for Change MK.

Liav Collins and Haim Shapiro contributed to this report.

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# Housing bill passes first reading

By LIAT COLLINS

On its first vote of the summer session, the Knesset yesterday passed the first reading of a bill to allow long-term residents of public housing to buy their homes at a significant discount. It passed 72 to 3.

The bill, presented by MK Ran Cohen (Meretz) and a group of parliamentarians from several parties, passed first reading after a compromise was reached under which coalition whip Meir Sheerit withdrew the no-confidence motion he had called on the vote at the end of the winter session to thwart the bill's passage.

Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein (Yisrael Ba'aliya) opposed the bill, saying large numbers of eligible people are waiting for public housing and no

new places would be available if the bill passes. Yisrael Ba'aliya whip Roman Bronfman, however, was one of the MKs signed on the bill.

Under the compromise, the bill passed first reading but will not come up for second and third readings until the government has fully discussed an alternative bill being prepared by Sheerit with the government's approval and according to the principles of the Gadish Committee.

Both Cohen and Sheerit praised the success of reaching a compromise which included both opposition and coalition.

A separate bill by Tamar Gozansky (Hadash) which would also allow the children of public housing residents to stay on and buy their parents' homes after their death also passed first read-

ing yesterday.

Sheerit's bill has yet to be finalized but should pass by the end of the sitting at the beginning of August, he said. It is based on a principle that public-housing residents would receive a basic discount of 20 percent of the value of their apartment and then a further discount, up to 75 percent, according to the number of years' residency, the number of family members, income and the location - with larger discounts going to residents of development towns and towns close to hostile borders.

For example an apartment in Kiryat Shmona worth NIS 184,000 could be bought for NIS 39,205 (a 79% discount) and an apartment in Yavne worth NIS 235,000 could be bought for NIS 200,000 (a 60% discount). There are 120,000 public hous-

ing units throughout the country.

Sheerit said some of the funding would come from using the aid the public-housing residents are eligible for - like most other first time house buyers - but have not used.

The details on using the income from the sales to finance the construction of more public housing units or renovations of vacant property have yet to be fully formulated, Sheerit said, but added this is his intention.

Nina Gilbert adds: Meanwhile, the Treasury announced yesterday that the Gadish Committee has reached a decision on recommendations for aiding residents of public housing in purchasing their apartments.

The committee, headed by economist Ya'acov Gadish and including representatives from the Finance, Housing, and Absorption

ministries, was set up by the government and accelerated its work due to opposition to the private member's bill on the issue.

It recommends giving aid to residents of public housing who do not own other homes, those with low income, and residents who have lived in the housing more than seven years. Extra assistance is also to be given to those living in the periphery and with very low incomes.

The Treasury noted that the government opposes the bill, since it is too broad and does not differentiate among different types of residents and the location of the apartments. It would cost billions of shekels and would most of all harm the weakest sectors of the population, who would be left without any housing solution, the Treasury said.

## NEWS

in brief

### Israeli tries to swim to Egypt

Egyptian police on Sunday detained an Israeli man who swam from Israel to Tabat, claiming he was fed up with Israel and wanted to live in Egypt, a newspaper said. The man was carrying nothing but three copies of the Torah in a plastic bag strapped to his waist. *Al-Akhabar* reported in yesterday's edition. It said the man identified himself as Mordechai Levy, 32. He swam about 15 kilometers from Eilat and was picked up by Egyptian police while still some distance from the shores of Tabat. AP

### Dor Shalom protests Rabin defacement

The left-wing peace group Dor Shalom reacted yesterday to the posting of eight photo-montage nude "pictures" of former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin on the entranceway of its Jerusalem facility by posting banners all over the city declaring "Carrying on in Rabin's way: education, peace, security." Police are still investigating the incident. Anonymous phone calls claimed that the outlawed Kach organization did it, but spokesman Noam Federman denied that Kach was involved. "The movement had no part in the act, but this is an issue of artistic expression and therefore I do not condemn it," he said. *Elli Wohlgeleitner*

### New policy on overseas dialing providers

Phone subscribers who have not registered with an overseas dialing provider by January 1, 1999 will be allocated by chance to one of the three companies. They don't have to use this company to call, but if they dial 00 (the former Bezeq International overseas dialing code) that company will be automatically contacted. The Communications Ministry announced this new policy yesterday, declaring that the arrangement that was supposed to take effect, in which each subscriber would have to sign up with a company, was unworkable. *Judy Siegel*

## Gov't to improve border control system

By HAIM SHAPIRO

With millions of visitors expected to flood the country for the year 2000, the Interior Ministry is planning to cut the time it takes to check each incoming passenger at the airport border control from 45 seconds to 15 seconds.

According to the plan, the border controls are to be further computerized, with information about incoming passengers when they check in before their flight to Israel.

The plan, which has still not received the approval of the Treasury, could be installed within a year, the Interior Ministry representative said yesterday at a meeting of the Interministerial Committee for the Year 2000.

Tourism Minister Moshe Katsav, who heads the committee, reported that he had received the approval of the Finance and National Infrastructure ministers to give high priority to preparations for the year, with particular emphasis on the building of highways.

The Public Works Department presented its plans for highway construction, particularly around Nazareth and Tiberias and elsewhere near Lake Kinneret.

In a related development, the Absorption Ministry yesterday opened a course for 40 Russian-speaking immigrants who are being trained to be tourist guides.

According to the Absorption Ministry, it hopes to train some 500 Russian-speaking guides by the year 2000.



### Lobbying to recycle

A lobby was launched yesterday in Tel Aviv to push for passage of a law providing for payment of a deposit to customers who return bottles. Dan Frier, director-general of Soda Club, flanked by Eitan Gdalkon (r) and Dan Fish, director-general of "Man, Nature and Law," are the leaders of the effort. The law would also penalize companies that package their drinks in non-recyclable bottles. *(Assaf Shilo/Israel Sun)*

## Netanya parents keep pupils home to protest budget cuts

By Jerusalem Post Staff

Parents in Netanya yesterday shut down local schools for the second day to protest the city council's decision to cut its education budget by eight percent.

Israel Radio reported that the decision to cut the budget was because of a NIS 150 million deficit in the council's budget. Local parents association head Avi Maxner said the steps taken by the parents, which kept some 35,000 out of school, made no impression on the council.

"The height of the paradox was yesterday when during a meeting of the council a proposal was raised to re-examine the idea of cutting the budget. The mayor, who had said that education was one of his priorities, asked to have the proposal removed from the agenda, and the person in charge of education helped the mayor in removing it from the agenda," he said.

Ori Ilan, in charge of education for the municipality, said the strike was unjustified. "To say today that because we cut 8% of the budget they go on strike for two days is... unparalleled hutzpa which stems from other reasons that have nothing to do with this matter," he said. The strike is due to end today, but parents have vowed to fight the cutbacks by other means.

Meanwhile, Histadrut Teachers Union leader Avraham Ben-Shabbat announced yesterday that the union was renewing its sanctions throughout the educational system beginning tomorrow, because negotiations between the teachers and the Treasury regarding compensation for teachers accompanying after-school activities are still at an impasse.

The Histadrut Teachers Union teachers will not accompany after-school trips or other after-school activities, in support of the demands of the Secondary School Teachers.

## Bid to display 'Jesus Boat' at Vatican

By HAIM SHAPIRO

Is the Antiquities Authority really considering sending the "Jesus Boat" to the Vatican to be displayed there for the year 2000 or is the plan a ruse for funds to display the boat properly?

The boat was discovered in 1986 by two members of Kibbutz Ginosar, after a drought exposed it near the shore of Lake Kinneret. It is believed to be about 2,000 years old.

Because of its age and the fact that boats on the lake figure largely in New Testament accounts of the lives of Jesus and his disciples, it quickly became known as the "Jesus Boat."

It became a major attraction for Christian visitors and is now on display at the kibbutz as part of the Yigal Alon Museum.

Last week Tourism Ministry Director-General Shabtai Shai wrote to Antiquities Authority Director-General Amir Drori, vigorously opposing what he described as a plan being considered by the Authority to send the boat to the Vatican.

"The boat is a significant part of the itinerary of the pilgrim," Shai said in his letter.

Shai added that in recent years kibbutz representatives had made considerable efforts to raise funds to improve the hall in which it is exhibited. The ministry had allocated NIS 2 million to the project, he said. Beyond that, the State Requests Committee had approved an allocation of NIS 200,000. Shai said that at a time of eco-

nomic recession, when the tourism industry is going through a severe crisis, it seems strange to transfer a tourist attraction and revenue source to an Israeli competitor. Is the authority trying to encourage tourist visits to the Vatican? Shai asked.

Antiquities Authority spokeswoman Osnat Guez confirmed there had been a proposal to transfer the boat to the Vatican for the year 2000. She said that experts had come from Italy to examine the boat and determine whether it could be transported safely.

However, she said the subject is of such importance that the only person who could comment on it is Drori, who is presently out of the country.

Yesterday however, Niv Laish, head of the Jordan Valley and Kinneret Tourism Association, said that there had been a proposal to send the boat to the Vatican, but he did not believe that it would be

implemented.

"There is an idea of doing it, because it is displayed here in such a miserable way," Laish said. "We know that the Vatican wants it," Laish said.

Laish added that there were plans to build a hall where several groups of tourists could see the boat at one time. The cost of such a hall would be about \$1 million, of which half has already been covered by a private donation, he said. The ministry had promised to come up with the rest of the money, he said.

Nevertheless, according to at least one tourism professional in Galilee, the entire plan of sending the boat to the Vatican was thought up in order to gain sufficient funds for the museum to exhibit the boat properly. There had never been any real intention to allow the boat out of the country, the source insisted.



The Knesset

A special Knesset session in memory of Chaim Herzog, Israel's sixth president, will take place today, May 5, 1998, at 4 p.m., in the presence of President Ezer Weizman.

From 3 p.m. until the meeting ends at approximately 5 p.m., permanent entry passes to the Knesset will not be valid.

Entry to the Knesset will be by invitation only.

## شهر الثقافة والكتاب العربية

### חודש התרבות וספר הערבי 1998

THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT  
invites the public to  
**ARAB CULTURE MONTH 1998**  
9.5.98 - 9.6.98

**Opening Events - Sunday, May 17, 1998, Beit Hagefen, Haifa**  
Arab Folklore and Debka Carnival through the streets of Haifa, on the theme of an "Arab Wedding".  
Under the patronage of Mr. Yitzhak Levi, Minister of Education, Culture and Sport, in the presence of Mr. Amram Mizna, Mayor of Haifa, and with the participation of Mr. Ibrahim Nimmer Hussell, Chairman of the Council of Heads of Arab Local Councils and Mayor of Shfarim, Ambassadors, Knesset Members, public figures, heads of local councils, artists and performers.

6 p.m. Gan Hazikaron, Haifa - start of Debka and Arab folklore carnival.  
Carnival route: Hassan Shukri, Khouri, Wadi Nenas pedestrian mall, Wadi, Kaisariya, Yavne and Shabtai Levi.  
Participating: 45 Debka and folklore troupes from all over the country, horse-drawn carriages, bands, Zedgal and Hada groups.

7:30 p.m. Beit Hagefen sports ground, opening of National Arabic Book Fair  
8:00 p.m. Beit Hagefen Square, Opening Ceremony of Arab Culture Month 1998.

**National Arabic Book Fair - May 17 - June 6, 1998 - Beit Hagefen**  
Kolbe Sifaram (S.H.R.), Salah Abasi  
Over 500,000 books from Israel and Arab countries. Open every day from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Cultural events, theater, storytelling, music and cinema every day at Beit Hagefen.  
Pita with za'atar, tea, coffee and narghiles in the Kan Zaman Tent.

**Exhibition of Jewish and Arab Children's Drawings at Beit Hagefen May 10 - 21, 1998.**  
"Haifa's Children Draw Peace and Coexistence" - School Competition.  
Festive opening on Sunday May 10 at 5 p.m. in the presence of Mr. Aharon Zavida, Head of the Haifa District.

**National Exhibition of Arab Artists - Festive Opening, Beit Hagefen May 23, 1998.**  
14 Arab artists exhibit their work at four locations. Opening dates:  
Abu Senan, May 9; Beit Hagefen, May 23; Tira, June 6; Daliat al-Carmel, June 13. Curator: Jamal Hassan  
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**Two Days of Discussions on the Arabic Language at Beit Hagefen**  
Is the Arabic Language in Danger? + Mutual Influence between Hebrew and Arabic  
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Cultural Administration - Department of Arabic Culture

**Haifa Municipality**



## All our yesterdays

As the years advance, anniversaries become as tedious as birthdays, and seem to come round even more often. There's worse to come — a cloud of millennium bugs is gathering on the media horizon and soon we will all be choking.

An American magazine apparently has kicked off the plague already by doing an article on the most important persons and events of the past 1,000 years. It named Thomas Edison as the top person, and the first printing of the Bible as the event. (Since I haven't seen it, this is hearsay sourcing.) Here comes all our yesterdays, and boy,

### Column One



Thomas O'Dwyer

are we ever going to get them all over the next 20 months. Just stand by for the 1,000-year blockbusters from glossy magazine stables. This would follow a trend set by Time's recent list of the century's most influential people, which turned out to be a list of lots of people you have never heard of. As a millennium exercise, would anyone care to have a go at the 100 most important people of the 11th century? Anyone care? I thought not.

For this coming anniversary, we have the Internet for the first time, and it's already shuddering under the weight of millennium trivia.

### Fungus features

Back in 999 this was called the Grapevine — a lightning-fast source of rumor, innuendo, falsehoods, ignorance, vested interests, conspiracy theories and religious fanaticism, much of it spread by immature and intolerant know-alls on a short fuse. Thank goodness things have progressed since then.

Before we drift back to the "most important" things, it's worth mentioning the three most important discussions about the millennium that are now clogging the superhighway with information road-rage. These are: When Is Party Time? (midnight 1999 or midnight 2000); Is the Millennium Bug Hype? (it's a conspiracy, idiots); and What Do You Know About Anything Anyway, Fungus Features?

But even the most serious attempts to draw up a winners and losers list for the past 1,000 years will run into serious trouble.

Jerry Seinfeld once crushed a debate about the importance of the explorer who discovered the Mississippi by saying "Oh yeah! Like they wouldn't have found it anyway!" Say the same for the light bulb and printing, and it's goodbye to Edison and Gutenberg as Messrs. Millennium.

### Hell's list

In sorting important events, the media also is going to run up against the "nice guys" syndrome. Isaac Newton may have been the key individual scientist of the millennium, but he was a petty-minded, bad-tempered, vindictive weasel. Because his fault was social unpleasantness long forgotten, no one feels

uncomfortable placing him high on a millennial list.

But what of the trio of mass murderers who profoundly changed modern history — Hitler, Stalin and Mao Zedong. Putting them high on a "most influential" list is unthinkable.

Yet the single most important development of the millennium, from our historical perspective, was the European colonization of North and South America. This involved the mass exterminations of vast native American cultures. Don't tell a Cherokee this was the pinnacle of millennial progress.

"From our historical perspective" is an important qualification when plowing through the millennium drive. By the fifth millennium, our star-hopping descendants probably will consider Neil Armstrong's moon landing as the most significant event in history.

In the year 98, I would have cited the foundation of Rome as the most important event in that millennium's history. It seems less so today, although without Rome, the new religion of Christianity would not have had a ready-made and robust hierarchy to infiltrate.

What, after all, is the millennium? It is the arbitrary 2,000th birthday of Jesus, who actually was born in 3 or 4 BCE, and who never intended to found Christianity anyway. That was done with ruthless efficiency by the Roman Paul, who reinvented Jesus in the same way that Lenin later reinvented Karl Marx, and whose religion led the same ideological assault on Rome that Communism led on Russia.

### Millennium bells

Columnists already are scoffing at how America-centric the millennium lists are becoming. To balance obvious "most important dead, white males" like Washington, Lincoln, Franklin and Edison, Americans will be forced to dredge up their politically correct historical blacks, women, Jews, Amerindians, Irish and Italians who were of no world importance whatsoever.

On the other hand, the white Eurocentrics will forget that without the anonymous Chinese who invented paper, the Gutenberg and Caxton Bibles would have been printed on dead cows for a thousand years, until Bill Gates invented dead-beat computer programs.

Pity the British. These proud island folk could have been celebrating 1,000 years without conquest were it not for Willie the Bastard, who landed from France in 1066 (Damn!)

As for the Jewish people — they can afford to stay somewhat aloof, Jesus notwithstanding. (He shoulda been a doctor.) None of us will be around in 2340 for the Jewish media hype at the end of the sixth millennium. Now there's something to be grateful for. Millennial Bells? Shudder!

## Coping with Arabia's shifting sands

The US is watching closely as the Saudi oil kingdom slowly undergoes political transition

By MARK MATTHEWS

WASHINGTON — After 15 years as a partner and occasional sugar daddy to American presidents, Saudi Arabia's aging and ill King Fahd is fading from the scene, opening the way for a future US-Saudi relationship that many predict will be less close and less generous.

Fahd's brief hospitalization last month focused renewed attention on succession inside the secretive royal family. And the nation's leaders came under a brighter global spotlight in the aftermath of a stampede that killed more than 100 people at the annual Moslem pilgrimage to Mecca known as the Haj.

While Fahd's half-brother and designated heir, Crown Prince Abdullah, is already effectively running the government, he is in his mid-70s. Abdullah is likely to be one of several interim kings paving the way for a new generation of leaders, Saudi watchers say.

And as the kingdom transfers power, it must grapple with regional threats to its security, declining oil revenues, a backward economy and corruption among some of its thousands of princes.

The royal family has to find a middle ground between conflicting pressures from two groups of domestic critics: Western-leaning technocrats demanding greater openness and conservative Moslem leaders trying to block modernization.

At the same time, it has to respond to growing anti-American feeling throughout the Arab world caused by the deadlock in the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Despite spending large sums on American military hardware, Saudi Arabia remains heavily dependent on US forces to protect it from Persian Gulf rivals Iraq and Iran.

"Saudi Arabia will remain as dependent on the West for security as the West is dependent on Saudi Arabia for oil," writes Anthony Cordesman, who specializes in Middle East security at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

But under Prince Abdullah, the royal family is moving to strengthen ties with the Arab and Moslem worlds, forging a cooperative axis with Egypt and Syria and easing tensions with the non-Arab conservative Shiite Moslem regime in Iran.

"If it strengthens ties with the United States without also strengthening ties with its [Arab and Moslem] patrimony, that will mean it is co-opted [by the US]," says Clovis Maksoud, a former Arab League ambassador to the US who now heads American University's Center for the Global South.

Assuming a higher profile in the region "will provide immunity against anything that might develop in terms of internal fissures," Maksoud said.

Already, Saudi Arabia has shown it can say no to US requests — for example, in limiting its cooperation with the FBI in the probe of the 1996 Khobar Towers bomb-



US Vice President Al Gore walks with Crown Prince Abdullah in Saudi Arabia last week. The septuagenarian acting ruler is likely to be one of several interim kings before a new royal generation takes over. (AP)

ing that killed 19 American servicemen. And in the years ahead, this trend "is likely to continue and intensify," says Phebe Marr, a longtime Persian Gulf scholar and former analyst for the Defense Department.

The future of Saudi Arabia holds major significance for Americans. As the nation with the world's largest oil reserves, it is central to US strategy for maintaining reliable supplies of energy to the industrialized world at stable prices.

"Your children's children's children will be buying Saudi oil," says a senior US official.

And as the guardian of the two holiest Islamic shrines at Mecca and Medina, which draw hundreds of thousands of pilgrims annually, the kingdom has a dominant role in the Moslem world.

Since assuming the throne in 1982, Fahd has been a warm friend to the US — buying American weaponry, funding the anti-Soviet guerrilla war in Afghanistan and even subsidizing pet presidential projects, such as former President Reagan's campaign to topple Nicaragua's Sandinista government.

After Saddam Hussein's troops invaded neighboring Kuwait in 1990, Saudis feared the Iraqis would then try to take over their kingdom's oil fields, giving them

a stranglehold on the global economy.

Defying custom, Fahd welcomed US troops onto Saudi soil and agreed to pay billions of dollars to help finance the war against Iraq.

"Generally King Fahd had a habit of being overly generous with the US. Abdullah is a little more pragmatic in terms of Saudi interests," says Nathaniel Kern, president of Foreign Reports Inc., an oil-industry newsletter.

Fahd, who was born in 1921, began ceding power to Abdullah after he suffered a stroke in November 1995. Fahd is overweight and a longtime smoker. Men in the family usually die in their mid-70s.

While President Clinton, out of courtesy, telephoned the king twice during the recent crisis with Iraq, Abdullah was the chief point of contact for Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Defense Secretary William Cohen.

"De facto, the crown prince is governing the country and is displaying increasing confidence," said a senior administration official.

Since the 1953 death of modern Saudi Arabia's King Abdul Aziz ibn Saud, the throne has passed to a succession of sons. Abdul Aziz, who had 22 wives, fathered 44 sons.

But those groomed for power are

advancing in years. Fahd was born in 1921; Abdullah in 1923. Abdullah's likely successor is the current defense minister, Prince Sultan, who is close to the same age.

The result could be a series of brief reigns, a "king for a day phenomenon," says Patrick Clawson, a Persian Gulf expert at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Some experts see Prince Salman, a full brother of Fahd who is now a regional governor, succeeding Sultan.

"Probably after Salman we're going to see significant generational change," says Cordesman.

While senior US officials expect the regime to survive, they say it will come under increasing pressure to liberalize. And as it does so, it may well be buffeted by domestic public opinion that is less friendly to the United States than its leaders are.

Abdullah is not anti-American, but is "much, much more interested in the Arab and Moslem world than he is in the West," says Clawson of the Washington Institute. "He is more concerned about being in tune with popular opinion."

Abdullah has strong ties to Arabia's Beduin tribal leaders, and is described as more pious and less of a spendthrift than King Fahd.

Still, specialists say he faces a formidable challenge in cutting

government spending, privatizing industry and modernizing the economy.

One reason is that he will need to achieve a consensus among the senior princes for major changes.

"It's been a family business, not a one-man show," says William Quandt, a professor at the University of Virginia. Although Abdullah is described as personally honest, he will have a hard time expunging corruption. "I'm not sure any one person can root it out," says Quandt.

With the US-led Israeli-Arab peace process stalled and Iraqi people still suffering under economic sanctions pushed by the United States, the Saudi public, like much of the Arab world, shows less and less willingness to cooperate with the US.

While officials here say they got the support they needed from the Saudi leadership in February for possible air strikes against Iraq, they did not ask to launch offensive strikes from Saudi bases. This was an unspoken admission that the Saudis didn't want to hear such a request.

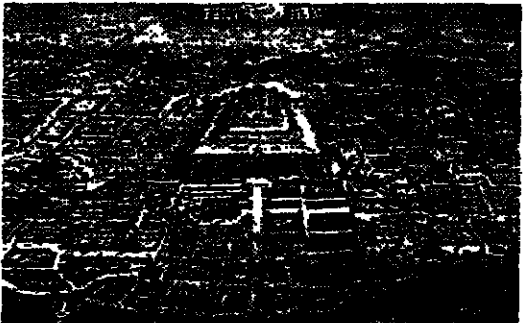
Over the long term, says one Saudi watcher, the US may have to come up with an alternative way of protecting the gulf without keeping American forces permanently stationed in the kingdom. (The Baltimore Sun)

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# US: Turk Cypriots sabotaged peace talks

By JON HEMMING

NICOSIA (Reuters) - US envoy Richard Holbrooke yesterday blamed the breakaway Turkish Cypriot administration for the failure of talks to halt a slide toward conflict on the divided island of Cyprus.

"If progress is to be made, both sides must be willing to engage in give and take in serious negotiations. This is not the current situation. This is especially true for the Turkish Cypriots," Holbrooke told a news conference.

He was speaking after three days of shuttle diplomacy between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, divided by barbed wire since Turkey invaded the north of the island in 1974 after a brief Greek Cypriot coup engineered by the military junta then ruling Greece.

Holbrooke said Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş had demanded the Cypriot government recognize the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and pull out of membership negotiations with the European Union.

Well informed sources said Denktaş had also demanded that the economic embargo on the north be lifted.

"The Turkish Cypriot insistence that the Greek Cypriots withdraw their application for EU membership is not a realistic position in our view," said Holbrooke.

Turkey has threatened to use force to prevent the planned deployment by Greek Cypriots of Russian-made anti-aircraft missiles, due to arrive on the island

around August.

Greece, which has a defense pact with the Greek Cypriots, has warned it would regard a strike on the missiles as cause for war with old foe Turkey, ostensibly a NATO partner.

Holbrooke dismissed suggestions his mission was a failure.

"We came knowing this would happen... I do not consider this trip a failure. I consider the problems we encountered part of the process and we will remain committed," he said.

The US diplomat said both sides needed to submit a negotiation process but would not say what the Greek Cypriots could offer. The only reason he revealed the demands of the Turkish Cypriot side was because it was a position already known, he said.

The Turkish Cypriot enclave, set up in 1983, is recognized only by Turkey and has refused to take part in the current Cypriot EU entry talks until its sovereignty is accepted.

Denktaş sees the EU talks as an attempt to increase Greek influence over the island. Athens is a member of the EU, while Turkey's own decades-old efforts to join were frustrated last year.

"If there has been no progress on Cyprus, it is because of the Greek Cypriots' aim of getting the whole island with the help of Greece and using the EU," he told reporters yesterday.

Holbrooke said Cypriot President Glafcos Clerides, recognized abroad as the official head of the whole island, could not claim in reality to lead the Turkish Cypriots.

"It is clear Glafcos Clerides does not represent or have control over the people of northern Cyprus. He doesn't deny that, it is a fact," he said.

While welcoming the EU accession talks with Cyprus, Holbrooke said Brussels was wrong in leaving Turkey out of the enlargement process.

"It is that imbalance which I believe has led to the present impasse," he said.

Cypriot government spokesman Christos Stylianides said the government was "disappointed" that the talks would not resume.

"The international community must realize that the Turkish side is solely to blame for no progress being reached for a comprehensive solution to the Cyprus problem," he said.

Holbrooke, the inspiration behind the Dayton talks that ended the Bosnian war in 1995, said he had no immediate plans to meet the Cypriot leaders again but could return if invited.

His assistant, the US State Department's Thomas Miller, is also leaving Cyprus early, changing his initial plan to remain throughout this week. He will return at the end of the month.

The Cyprus conflict has defied numerous mediation attempts and put the eastward expansion of the EU in danger.

Greece had threatened to block Union enlargement because France opposes Cypriot membership until the island is united.

The row was patched up in March but analysts say it could resurface in the future.



Special US presidential envoy Richard Holbrooke watches as Greek Cypriot businessman Constantinos Lordos makes a direct call to the Turkish-occupied area of Cyprus yesterday at the inauguration of the UN-sponsored phone service, the first of its kind since Turkey invaded and occupied the northern third of the island in 1974. (AP)

## India looks China in the eye

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - India may be putting aside its obsession with old foe Pakistan, but to turn up the rhetoric on China is bad strategy and could hurt a tentative dialogue with its giant northern neighbor, analysts said yesterday.

Defense Minister George Fernandes said on Sunday that China was India's first rival and warned that it would be a mistake to underplay the threat from its giant northern neighbor.

"Of course China is the long-term challenge, economic rivalry is natural, but one does not have to advertise our strategic intentions," said former rear admiral Raja Menon. "We need to build a platform before we open our mouths."

China, a declared nuclear weapon state, leads India in nuclear tests since 1974, but refuses to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

In the 50 years since independence, India has fought three wars with neighboring Pakistan, two of them over the Himalayan region of Kashmir.

But Fernandes and military experts believe it is time to move forward.

"If we are going to get off our Pakistani fixation, that is a good step forward," Menon said.

"If your GDP [gross domestic product] is seven times theirs, if

### ANALYSIS

indigenous defense capabilities are 10 times theirs, if your air force is twice their size, to be caught in a situation where we keep talking of them is patently bad strategy," he said.

Fernandes, a former socialist firebrand whose regional group is a key partner in the Hindu nationalist-led coalition government, said China's military - especially naval - "encirclement" of India was cause for concern.

He said China had built a sophisticated surveillance base in Myanmar's Coco Islands and was upgrading airfields in Tibet to take fighter jets capable of striking at India's borders.

In April, the outspoken minister accused China of providing Pakistan with missile technology after Islamabad announced it had tested its longest-range missile, one capable of striking targets deep inside India. Beijing denied the allegation.

But Indian diplomats said China was seeking strategic gains, including access to the Indian Ocean, and it was time to worry about this - although not necessarily as the defense minister had done.

"In providing Pakistan with

maximum India-oriented military equipment and more or less taking over the naval space of Burma [Myanmar], they are seeking to expand their strategic space in this region," former foreign secretary S.K. Singh said.

"How long can a country of our size and shape be coy about it?" he said. "Of course making noise like this is not strategic thinking."

India and China, the world's two most-populous nations, fought a brief war in 1962, but have sought to rebuild ties since signing a pact to keep peace along their disputed border.

Negotiators have held several rounds of meetings to determine the boundary that runs through vast stretches of the Himalayas, but so far have made limited progress.

In 1996, both sides agreed on a set of confidence-building measures, including reduction of troops along the border and open military contacts.

Last week Fu Quanyou, chief of general staff of the People's Liberation Army, met Indian leaders and top military brass and was taken to Indian naval and air force installations. Both sides said they would work for regional stability.

"The notice has been served," Singh said, referring to Fernandes' comments on China.

"I think the diplomatic process will be quietly speeded up," he said.

## IMF: Asia crisis turning the corner

By CHRIS JOHNSON

SINGAPORE (Reuters) - Asia will emerge from its crisis stronger and as a model for good policy making, International Monetary Fund chief Michel Camdessus said yesterday.

Camdessus told a news conference in Singapore that the region's economic troubles were still not over, but there was a strong commitment in many quarters to solve the problems.

"The crisis is not yet over. But we are turning the corner," Camdessus said after opening a regional training institute, set up by Singapore and the IMF. "We have distinctly turned the corner in Thailand and Korea."

The IMF's managing director said reforms of financial markets and institutions being undertaken across the region would be painful but would leave Asia stronger and eventually able to return to the high rates of economic growth enjoyed before the economic crisis.

"Asia will again be a showcase, not just of high growth and sizable capital inflows... but of what countries can do to improve their policies, strengthen domestic institutions and governance, and thereby strengthen the foundations for sustained, high-quality growth," Camdessus earlier said in a speech to Asian central bankers and officials.

He said Asia had long been an example of the

benefits of globalization. In 1996, the region attracted almost half the \$235 billion in private capital flows to developing and transition economies.

Some of those flows had not been invested wisely, but moves toward globalization had allowed many Asian states to accelerate investment and growth and create more jobs, he said.

Camdessus said Asia's recent experiences had highlighted the risks for countries tapping global capital markets.

Speaking to the same audience, Singapore Finance Minister Richard Hu said countries needed adequate safeguards and disclosure rules before liberalizing their financial systems.

## Unabomber sentenced to four life terms

SACRAMENTO (AP)

Theodore Kaczynski, a confessed mail bomber whose 18-year campaign of violence terrorized academics and airlines executives, was given four consecutive life sentences yesterday after the wife of one of his victims urged the judge to lock the defiant terrorist "close to hell."

US District Judge Garland Burrell Jr. gave the 55-year-old former mathematician the sentence called for by a plea agreement that resolved charges related to three deaths and the maimings of two scientists.

"The defendant committed unspeakable and monstrous crimes for which he shows utterly no remorse," Burrell said, adding that he feared Kaczynski would

try to kill again if not closely watched.

Kaczynski's bombing campaign changed the way Americans mail packages and board airplanes and, at its height in July 1995, virtually shut down air travel on the West Coast.

Earlier, Kaczynski complained that the government had lied about his commitment to the Unabomber's anti-technology philosophy.

Kaczynski began the hearing by saying that the government, in court papers filed last week, was "discrediting me personally." But the wife of one of his victims had urged Burrell not to listen.

"Lock him so far down that when he dies he will be closer to hell," Susan Mosser said. David Kaczynski, who first

tipped authorities to the possibility his brother was the Unabomber, praised Mosser and the other victims for the "remarkable courage" it took to speak up in court.

"To all of these people, the Kaczynski family offers its sincerest apologies - we are very, very sorry," David Kaczynski said outside court.

As part of the plea bargain, Kaczynski acknowledged responsibility for all 16 Unabomber attacks between 1978 and 1995. He will be sent to a high-security federal prison, possibly in Lompoc or in Colorado.

In the prosecutors' sentencing memorandum, the government quoted extensively from Kaczynski's journals, in which he wrote of a deep hatred of people.

Nicknamed the Unabomber because he mainly aimed his explosives at university and airline targets, Kaczynski had demanded that his 30,000-word treatise on the evils of technology be published. But in his journals, the government said, Kaczynski scoffed at any supposed environmental ideals.

"I believe in nothing," Kaczynski wrote. "I don't even believe in the cult of nature-worshippers or wilderness-worshippers. (I am perfectly ready to litter in parts of the woods that are of no use to me - I often throw cans in logged-over areas...)"

Of his killings, Kaczynski wrote: "My motive for doing what I am going to do is simply personal revenge."

## Indonesian student protests sliding toward anarchy

By RAJU GOPALAKRISHNAN

JAKARTA (Reuters) - Indonesia's military chief yesterday said student protests against President Suharto were sliding toward anarchy, but demonstrations against the ageing ruler persisted.

The government announced sharp hikes in fuel, electricity and transport prices - moves which could inflame further unrest among the nation's 200 million people, who are being battered by the worst economic crisis in decades.

Serpentine queues swiftly sprang up at gas stations before the price rises went into effect.

Armed Forces head and Defense Minister General Wiranto, probably Indonesia's most powerful man after Suharto, said he had told army commanders to crack down on student demonstrations which moved off campus.

"There is proof that if students go out of the campus, the protests become uncontrollable," Wiranto said after a meeting with Suharto. "It has been proved in Medan. Therefore, I have ordered the military to take stern action against activities that are clearly moving toward anarchy, like in Medan."

Analysts said the increase in fuel prices would ripple through the economy, adding to inflationary pressures and provide potent fodder for further anti-government agitation.

News of the price hikes had not spread, but student protests were said during the day in the city of Medan, the scene for some of the most violent clashes in recent weeks.

Some 3,000 students from sev-

eral Medan campuses confronted security forces at the Teachers' Training Institute. Many hurled stones, some threw petrol bombs and the security forces responded with tear gas and rubber bullets, witnesses said.

Protests were also staged in Jakarta and Surabaya. In central Jakarta, gangs of youths threw rocks at each other in the low-income Tanah Abang district, but it was not immediately known what provoked the violence.

The government announced the fuel price rises just hours before the International Monetary Fund was to hold a board meeting in Washington to approve further disbursements from a \$40 billion bailout package to help the nation.

IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus told a news conference in Singapore he was convinced Indonesia was committed to implementing the financial reform package it agreed with the fund and that he had recommended approving the payout.

IMF officials say the board is likely to approve a \$1b. disbursement and a further \$2b. in June and July.

Indonesia pledged to reduce subsidies on fuel and electricity under reforms agreed with the IMF and the price increases have been long anticipated despite warnings that they may lead to more unrest.

"Within one week, there may be an enormous increase in riots and violence," said Hermawan Sulistyono, an analyst with the Indonesian Institute of Sciences. "Not only the students, from tomorrow, it will be much easier for students to get

support from other segments of society. Now we are just counting the days for the final clash between the status quo government and the reform forces."

Students across the country have been demanding since February that the 76-year-old Suharto quit the office he has held for over three decades because of the economic crisis.

The protests have become increasingly violent over the past two weeks, especially in Medan on Sumatra Island, where students have burned vehicles and hurled Molotov cocktails at troops.

The price rises announced yesterday cut a broad swathe through the economy. Energy Minister Kuntoro Mangkusubroto told reporters premium gasoline prices would rise by 71 percent to 1,200 rupiah (\$0.15) per liter.

Prices for other petroleum products were also raised, but not by the same extent. The price of kerosene, widely used by the poor in Indonesia for cooking, was raised by 25% to 350 rupiah per liter.

Kuntoro also said electricity prices would be raised an average 20% in May with further 20% increases in August and November.

Transport and Communications Minister Giri Suseno said rail fares would almost double to 27,500 rupiah/km., while bus fares would rise by about two-thirds.

Cumulative inflation in the first three months of the year has been about 25%, and analysts said the increases in: prices of fuel, electricity and transport - the core of the economy - would lead to another round of price increases.

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# Personnel executives ask the strangest questions

**By KIRSTIN DOWNEY GRIMSLEY**

WASHINGTON — At 8:30 a.m., the phone starts ringing. And ringing. And ringing.

Every day, more than 300 people, mostly personnel executives from around the country, call the information hot line at the Alexandria, Va., headquarters of the Society for Human Resource Management, where nine counselors are available to answer their vexing work-force questions.

"Hello? We just hired a female employee, and when we checked her Social Security status, we found out she's really a man. Should we tell his or her co-workers?"

"Can I fire an employee under psychiatric care who has threatened my life after a disciplinary notice?"

Some of the callers are experienced human-resource experts themselves, puzzling over a thorny dilemma or looking for an informed sounding board from outside the company. Others are complete novices to the trade, arbitrarily transferred to handle new duties in employee relations. Their questions reflect the bafflement afflicting many employers over the complex nuances of personnel regulations and the maze of sometimes conflicting laws. Many are numb with fear that a misstep will lead to a lawsuit — and their queries show it.

"Hello? Someone has died at his desk. What should we do?" Deborah Keary, director of the Society's information center, who heads the team answering the flood of incoming calls, shakes her head as she remembers that call, when a woman executive cautiously described to her a lifeless co-worker still sitting at his desk in an office.

"I said, 'My God, why are you calling me? Call 911. Call an ambulance,'" Keary recalled. The woman hung up almost immediately, and Keary was left hoping that medical help had been summoned. The woman never called back.

Keary later speculated that perhaps the co-worker was already visibly dead, perhaps even stiffening, and co executives had turned their thoughts to possible business consequences.

"The first thing they think of is not what I should do, but will I be sued?" Keary said. "We're such a litigious society. It's such a pity."

But difficult questions are all in a day's work for Keary and her colleagues. Other queries they have fielded, and their responses, include:

Q. "We are in a university setting, and we have a security guard who seems very moody and upset lately. Is it OK to take his gun away from him?"

Q. "Can I fire an employee who brings in an unassembled bomb to work?"

A. Keary recommends all companies develop a "zero-tolerance" policy banning threats, aggression, violence and weapons in the workplace, punishable by disciplinary action and dismissal. That way, if a situation arises, personnel officials have specific guidelines to follow. She said that executives have an obligation to provide a safe workplace for all their workers.

In addition, she said, companies have a right to expect a certain performance level from workers. The security guard, for example, is likely not doing well in his job, and probably should not be handling a gun if he seems to pose a danger to others, Keary said. She suggested he be placed on administrative leave and referred for counseling through the university's employee assistance program.

As for the unassembled bomb, Keary said she believes the company needs to investigate whether the thing is really a bomb. If it's not assembled, she said, it technically may not pose a danger, so it would be best to get all the facts before firing anybody.

Q. "We have always fired people who get sick and have to take time off. Does the Family and Medical Leave Act mean we have to stop doing this?" "Do we have to permit a worker to take time off for a broken wrist?"

A. Well, yes and no. The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), passed in 1993, allows employees to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in any one year when they become ill, when a family member becomes ill or when they have a baby or adopt a child. The criterion Keary tells companies to apply is whether the patient is under the continuing care of a physician. Suspected malingers can be asked to present a note from the doctor, although the request can raise fairness issues if some people are asked for notes and others are not.

But because the federal law only covers about half the work force — companies that have fewer than 50 workers are exempt, as are larger companies with small, far-flung operations — many workers can still be fired if they take time off when they become ill.

Still, Keary said she advises companies that what she calls the "kinder, gentler" approach of accommodating workers who are struck with illness is better for company morale.

Keary said the company that fires all workers who become ill was a large manufacturing company with about 500 employees. "These are the kind of people who are the reason we have the FMLA," she said. "People who are unreasonable — that's why Congress has to pass laws like that, and why we all now have to live with it."

Q. "We require all our employees to take water-safety training and the women have requested separate training from the men. How do I tell the women this would be unfair?"

A. "Personally, we didn't think

it was unfair," Keary said. "We're a bunch of women. We all said we don't want people at work to see us in our bathing suits. And seriously, there's a suggestion of intimacy that your employees may not want to have."

Keary also said unisex water training could pose potential sexual-harassment problems later. "What if one woman looked really good in her bathing suit and it led to comments and a hostile environment?" she said.

Q. "Can we fire an employee who just ran over a customer with a forklift?"

A. Yes, but proceed with caution, Keary said. Was it an unfortunate accident by a well-trained veteran employee? Wild driving? A malicious attack by an unstable worker? Or did the brakes on a company-owned vehicle fail? Was the customer hurt? "You can fire any employee at any time (except those protected by bargaining agreements or special regulations), but you should always think before you fire people," she said.

After all, if the customer sues, the employer would prefer the worker testifying on his behalf rather than the customer's.

Q. "Do we have to allow an employee to bring in snakes because his psychiatrist feels it will help him with his phobia?"

A. "Do we have to allow an employee to send and receive pornographic material via e-mail because he feels it will help him deal with his doctor-diagnosed attention deficit disorder?"

A. "The answer is no," she said. "It's an undue business hardship because most of your employees would be upset by that."

Many employers, Keary said, agonize over questions relating to mental illness because the Americans with Disabilities Act, passed in 1990, makes it illegal to discriminate against workers who become physically or mentally impaired. It requires employers to help accommodate workers with disabilities. But it does not require employers to accept work arrangements that are greatly disruptive to other workers.

Q. "Where can we find a motivational instructor to teach our employees how to fire walk on hot coals?"

A. Call the American Association for Training and Development. (Washington Post)

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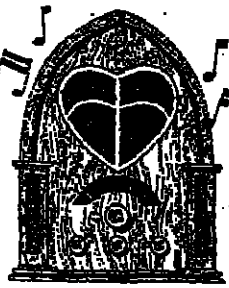
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# The female Garth Brooks

In Tune



By David Brinn

Donny and Marie Osmond may have crooned about being a little bit country and a little bit rock 'n' roll, but Shania Twain and her husband/producer Robert John "Mutt" Lange make it a reality. Twain's life reads like one of those country tearjerkers with a happy ending. The stunning Canadian-born half Native-American lost her parents in a road accident, forcing her at age 21 to support her younger siblings with her untested musical talent.

A professional long-distance phone relationship with stellar rock producer Lange (Def

guitars featured on many songs but will melt at Twain's vocals and subject matter, ranging from domestic abuse to the come-hither message of the title song.

Far from the roots country movement, Twain appeals directly to the mall crowd. But she does it in such an appealing way, it's difficult not to get hooked.

With Bruce Springsteen Svengali Jon Landau providing career guidance, the Mutt and Shania show will be on the air for years to come.

**THERAPY'S** *Semi-Detached* will be a welcome reminder to those who cut their rock teeth on the Ramones, Buzzcocks and those other deacons of 1970s New Wave. Therapy? has kept the basic back beat alive in this celebration of social mania and a general feeling of angst.

Originally a foursome out of Belfast, Therapy's stormy career reflects what you would expect from a Northern Ireland band. Heck, they feel angst on a good day. Personnel changes and internal tensions almost blew the band apart, hence the "come back" appellation for *Semi-Detached*. The band's driving force, Andy Cairns, is still torn by his growing up a Protestant in Northern Ireland and it's reflected in the tortured music.

Musically, the album itself can be a bit erratic, with the uplifting punky beat digressing sometimes into some harsher moments, though most of these pieces are trying to say something via the very essence of their harshness.

If not a truly refreshing sound, Therapy? reminds us that mania remains the creative catalyst it's always been.

Leppard, Bryan Adams, The Cars) evolved into a storybook romance and musical collaboration.

The first fruits of their union was a huge 1995 country hit "The Woman in Me," which placed Twain squarely as the female Garth Brooks.

*Come On Over* strengthens Twain's pop crossover potential with a 16-song set that straddles the country/rock 'n' roll line like a master tightrope walker.

Lange's pop sensibilities and rock sheen complement Twain's twang, enabling pop fans to unabashedly climb on the bandwagon and shoot the disc straight to the top of *Billboard's* charts.

Country fans may be dismayed by the prominent morse code rock

**COME ON OVER**

Shania Twain (Hollywood)

**SEMI-DETACHED**

Therapy? (Hollywood)

**PEOPLE MOVE ON**

Bernard Butler (NMC)

## Sensuous 'Traviata'

### OPERA REVIEW

After having seen several traditional productions of *La Traviata*, you feel completely disinterested in this opus, claims the American director Christopher Alden, so you try to do something different.

Actually, he is not really "different" in this visually stunning production. Being a very musical opera director, he reads the score and the libretto thoroughly and

**LA TRAVIATA**  
By Giuseppe Verdi  
New Israeli Opera  
TAPAC, May 1 & 2

translates them into the totally justified stage language.

Alden, memorable to Israeli opera buffs for turning *Pagliacci* inside out a few years ago, this time strips off the tinsel of the Parisian *demi-monde*.

The NIO's *La Traviata* looks very much like the work of a team that is gifted and young in spirit (sets - Paul Steinberg, lighting - Constance Hoffman, costumes - Adam Silverman), united and led by the director. They are interested in one thing only: telling a heart-rending story, which takes place in an expensive brothel where men were allowed to live out all their fantasies.

Consciously balancing on the thin border of good taste, the team creates a sensuous, bizarre and decadent setting for this drama. They speak with clear symbols, among which the spacious bed is the central one. They work cleverly with the space, light and color, drawing with deliberately broad strokes, and they never hide their tools or instruments.

Alden contrasts Violetta dramatically to the perverted world (her lover, Alfredo, and Germont, his father, included) to which she once belonged.

All this can work if she really differs from her surroundings. And here the Italian soprano Fiorella Bureto emerges as an unequivocal winner. In every aria, this marvelous singing actress turns a new page in the tragic story of a tender, loving woman victimized by the male-dominated society.

They say that in this three-act opera you need three different singers for Violetta, but this is not true. One incomparable Fiorella



Vicente Ombuena as Alfredo

Bureto is enough. And she is a sufficient reason for seeing this production.

The Israeli singer Michal Shamir is quite another story. Her soprano is beautiful, her coloratura is impeccable but, God, how cold she is! You can hardly believe that her heroine cares for her lover and for her own life, for that matter.

While Bureto's Violetta is full of dignity, defending her love-creased world from the intruder Germont, that of Shamir is rude and she actually beats an elderly gentleman. And if Bureto is all anguish and despair in "Morrir si giovine" ("How sad to die so young"), there are just anger and irritation ringing in Shamir's voice.

Tenor Vicente Ombuena is a somewhat heavy and inexpressive Alfredo, while Richard Troxell in the same role makes Alfredo weak and infantile.

Baritone Jonathan Summers's Germont is too straightforward; that of Giancarlo Pasqueto is more convincing as a person of means who knows all the answers and feels good about it.

Israeli singers in minor roles (baritone Dan Ettinger as Marchese D'Obigny; tenor Sami Bechar as Gastone; soprano Svetlana Babajonov as Ammina; and others, especially singing actress, beautiful mezzo Hadar Halevi as Flora) positively deliver the goods.

With all due respect to the invited artists, I still cannot believe that Alfredo and Germont could not be recruited from the local forces.

The NIO choir is in its usual good form. Accolades must also go to the French maestro Frederic Chaslin, who offers a solid rendition of Verdi's masterpiece, thus producing the reliable support to the vocalists on the stage.



Shania Twain straddles the country/rock 'n' roll line like a master tightrope walker.

"When You Wish upon a Star" and Sarah Brightman's operatic rendition of Queen's "Who Wants to Live Forever?"

The plus side, though, of having names like Ronstadt, Jewel and Bette Midler on hand to draw in the crowd is the exposure given to some worthy talents who don't generally reach a mainstream audience, such as Beth Orton, Lori Carson and Paula Cole.

And best of all, there's not one track from Celine Dion, making this perhaps the first disc of 1998 that she has not appeared on.

Even without Dion, the wealth of talent displayed on *Just for You* without the benefits of many leading ladies (Annie Lennox, Chrissie Hynde) proves that, indeed, women are doing it for themselves.

**AFTER** months of sneak previews and single releases, *People Move On*, the debut disc by ex-Suede guitarist Bernard Butler, is finally here and it's about as good as the worn Brit-pop genre gets.

Butler, given the freedom from the constraints of working within a group, indulges himself by trying to

come up with anthems à la Oasis on almost every track. That he nearly succeeds is quite impressive.

But what's the point? There's not much that hasn't been done before by Noel Gallagher or, for that matter, by Suede.

"Stay" is already deservedly well known on local radio, and *People Move On* should be a big hit here, given how popular his former band is.

But now that he's gotten it out of his system, maybe Butler will go to join a group. I hear Suede is looking for a guitarist.

## A sentimental lament

It is hard to judge Dov Seltzer's new requiem for Yitzhak Rabin, which was given a solid, memorable performance by Zubin Mehta and the IPO. This is not just another opus and cannot simply be judged by pure musical standards.

This is an opus that carries a lot of emotion, which is evidenced in the way it was written and performed.

On one hand, it is an impressive work with some touching musical moments. On the other, the texts seem to dictate how the music is to be written and performed and not the other way around. The texts are powerful, well chosen and well edited, but I have great objections to the insertion of speeches by Rabin within the musical mélange. It makes the piece much more sentimental and apologetic than necessary.

*Lament for Yitzhak* is a work I

**IPO PREMIERES LAMENT FOR YITZHAK**  
Mama Auditorium  
Tel Aviv  
April 27

was happy to hear performed live, even if it had too many elements I could query.

The evening opened with a touching, poetic reading of Beethoven's violin concerto played by Pinchas Zukerman in a mesmerizing musical manner. *Michael Aizenstadt*

THERE was a sense of déjà vu in this gala concert. There were Perlman and Zukerman, each extraordinary in his own right and both unique as a duo, playing exquisite Mozart and less refined but always beguiling Bach. There was the powerhouse rendition of Beethoven's second piano concerto performed with gusto and fire by Yefim Bronfman, who is a joy to listen to whenever he sits down at the keys.

And there were the obligatory Israeli works - Paul Ben-Haim's *Fanfare to Israel* and the premiere of Noam Sheriff's *Genesis*, a solid opus lacking in originality and using pathos (children's choirs and soloists) and texts (the Bible) to the utmost without any clear musical statement or style.

But all this is neither special nor festive. Perlman, Zukerman and Bronfman, dear longtime IPO friends, were here to delight us a year ago at the memorable celebrations of the orchestra's 60th

anniversary, and Mehta and the orchestra were in much better form that time around.

One of the highlights should have been Italian mezzo Cecilia Bartoli, but she canceled at the last minute.

Opting for mass culture popularity rather than refined artistry, the replacement was Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli, who has made his fame in the pop musical world. On disc, Bocelli has a very charming

**IPO INDEPENDENCE DAY GALA**  
Mama Auditorium  
Tel Aviv  
April 30

voice. In the concert hall, his voice is so thin and small, it was barely heard in row five. Bocelli is not an opera singer. He is not aware of the right style for Puccini arias, and he definitely does not have the voice to sing them. Even on the more familiar terrain of Neapolitan songs, his performance leaves much to be desired.

Bottom line, what should have ended the concert with a bang resulted in a boring, disappointing finale to a concert that had some first-rate music making but which had nothing really special or worthy of the occasion.

The free humus, corn and baked potatoes during intermission and after the concert did not make the event a fitting concert for the nation's jubilee. *Michael Aizenstadt*

**THE Young Musicians' Group's** Chamber Spring was somewhat like a conservatory pupils concert featuring students not yet ripe for public exposure.

Only in part, though. In Poulenc's Sonata for clarinet and piano (Shirly Brill, Michael

**YOUNG MUSICIANS' GROUP**  
Works by Beethoven, Debussy, Bartok, Poulenc  
Jerusalem Music Center  
Mishkenot Sha'ananim, April 26

Barkovsky), the young musicians captured the work's spirit and highlighted its irony with astonishing delicacy and liveliness. The technical command of the instruments seemed to pose no problems, although, in fact, there were obviously many.

## Simultaneous 'Seinfeld' sign-off

The announcement that Channel 3 is to air the last-ever episode of the hugely popular comedy series *Seinfeld*, simultaneously with its US broadcast, at 7 a.m. on Friday, May 15, has generated a mixed reaction among local fans.

"That's very cool," says Australian immigrant Zoe Kaye, 25. "It's exciting that Israel can be on a par with America." And she's not fazed by the early hour of the broadcast. "I will definitely get up early to watch it, if I'm not working."

But New Yorker Dena Bailey, 26, who has lived here for three

years and is a regular *Seinfeld* watcher, says "Seeing as we are only in the middle of the last season of the series here, I wouldn't watch the last show yet."

Neither is she saddened by the series' end because "you can only do that kind of humor for so long without it getting tiresome."

Australian-born Ilana Lipski, 29, who has lived here for eight years, notes that *Seinfeld* "has become a popular subject of dinner conversation, especially among young English speakers." And, although "it isn't as good as it used to be," she may tape the final episode to watch later. *Jerusalem Post Staff*

## Don Juan loses his charm

### THEATER REVIEW

By NAOMI DOUDAI

Various interpretations as libertine, amoral, an archetypal rake, the macho figure of all time, decadent and hypocritical - there is no end to the character-

**DON JUAN**  
By Jean-Baptiste Moliere  
Hebrew Nathan Alterman  
Geshet 2, Old Jaffa

istics traditionally imposed on Moliere's *Don Juan*.

There is, too, the more intellectual, Cartesian angle, with the presentation based on the hero's declaration that all his credo amounts to is two plus two make four. This, backed up by his bravery in combat, his impassioned sense of justice in defense of his unknown enemy in the forest scene, make out of comedy a near tragedy.

Yet another favored interpretation projects him as the exponent of frankness and freedom in love. A figure epitomized by his cutting sarcasm, his colossal hutzpa with creditors, his audacity in love, he personifies the nonconformist rebel hero so beloved of a later period in the history of modern man. Here he is his very precursor liberated from Medieval mumbo jumbo.

But now that he's gotten it out of his system, maybe Butler will go to join a group. I hear Suede is looking for a guitarist.

But in Yvgeny Aryeh's production, all these possibilities are sidestepped. Overlooked as well as the indirection, irony and duality of Moliere's intent, all lost together with the grandeur, terror and tragedy implicit in the text.

In short, Geshet's *Don Juan* as much a anything represents Moliere misunderstood.

Reduced to an erotic entertainment with a barebreasted Follies-Bergere cabaret of seductive scarlet maidens, an arrogant, sinister, sadistic and satanic Don (Sami Samir) who, with a cosmetic sneer, poses like some muscled sexy model for Levi's Jeans, a scatter of gold-tasseled silks and velvets suggesting a sumptuous set, and played by a newly conscripted cast of young local actors (Geshet 2), this show smacks of raw high school dramatics rather than the polished product we have come to expect of Geshet.

Gal Kenar and Tamara Stern with Pierrot and Charlotte, a diverting peasant couple do, however, show immense potential as sophisticated comedians. The tubby, acrobatic Alexander Sanderovich in the role of the mercenary Sganarelle, enormously energetic, at times even exhibitionistic, steals the show in all his scenes.

He can hardly be blamed for upstaging a cast that on the whole showed itself barely capable of holding the stage on its own.

## TV Ratings: April 26-May 2

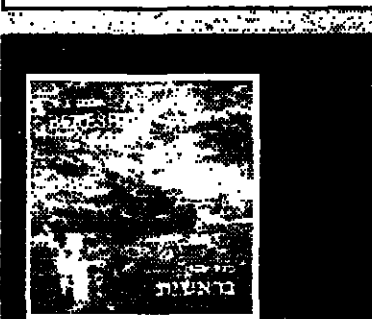
Program	Day	Channel	Rating
1. 50 Years of Israel Fashion	Sunday	2	33.2%
2. First in Entertainment	Monday	2	31.2%
3. Dan Shilon Live	Tuesday	2	31.1%
4. Remembrance Day ceremony	Tuesday	2	30%
5. Jubilee Bells	Thursday	1	28.7%
6. Torch-lighting ceremony	Wednesday	2	26.9%
7. Only in Israel	Thursday	2	26%
8. Jubilee Bells	Thursday	2	25%
9. Everyone's Equal	Saturday	2	24.7%
10. Hartzulim	Wednesday	2	24.4%

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## The virtual candidate

As former British prime minister Harold Wilson once said, "A week is a long time in politics." A week ago Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo was embroiled in a spat with the Labor Party over the No. 2 spot on his ticket. Yesterday, after the collapse of the deal that would have kept Labor out of the Tel Aviv mayoral race, Milo announced that he will run for prime minister instead. But if a week is a long time, then the two years before the next national election is an eternity.

So far, Milo has announced a virtual candidacy — an intention to lead a party that does not yet exist with a platform yet to be articulated. Certain aspects of the announcement, however, already speak volumes regarding the current state of Israeli politics.

First, Milo's party is to be a "centrist" party, dedicated to "bridging gaps" by being political, religious-secular, or social. It was not long ago that the center was a lonely place in Israeli politics. There were the examples of Ben-Gurion's Rafi Party in the 1960s, and Yigal Yadin's Democratic Movement for Change (DMC) in the 1970s, but both of these parties eventually broke up and were reabsorbed into the two major blocs.

Today, however, the leaders of the two major parties, like in the United States and Britain, are converging towards the post-ideological, post-party center. Despite the residual heat projected by the debate over the peace process, the Likud's de facto embrace of Oslo has whittled the differences between the major parties down to almost nothing. Even on the economy, the opposition flips between criticizing the government for being too pro-free market to not moving quickly enough in that direction.

This natural democratic trend toward the politics of centrism has been accelerated in Israel by the new election law, which has weakened both of the major parties. Already, the last election resulted in the birth of two new centrist parties, The Third Way and Yisrael Ba'aliya, which together have 11 Knesset seats. This process of implosion towards the center has been accompanied by disintegration, and the formation of new alliances, such as the strange combination of Geshet and Meretz in the Histadrut elections.

In general, Milo is clearly trying to position himself to pick up the pieces in an uncertain political landscape. Though he is postponing discussion of a specific platform until the end of his term in November, it is already clear that his emerging party will be only marginally interested in what has been the dominant schism in

Israeli politics — the peace process.

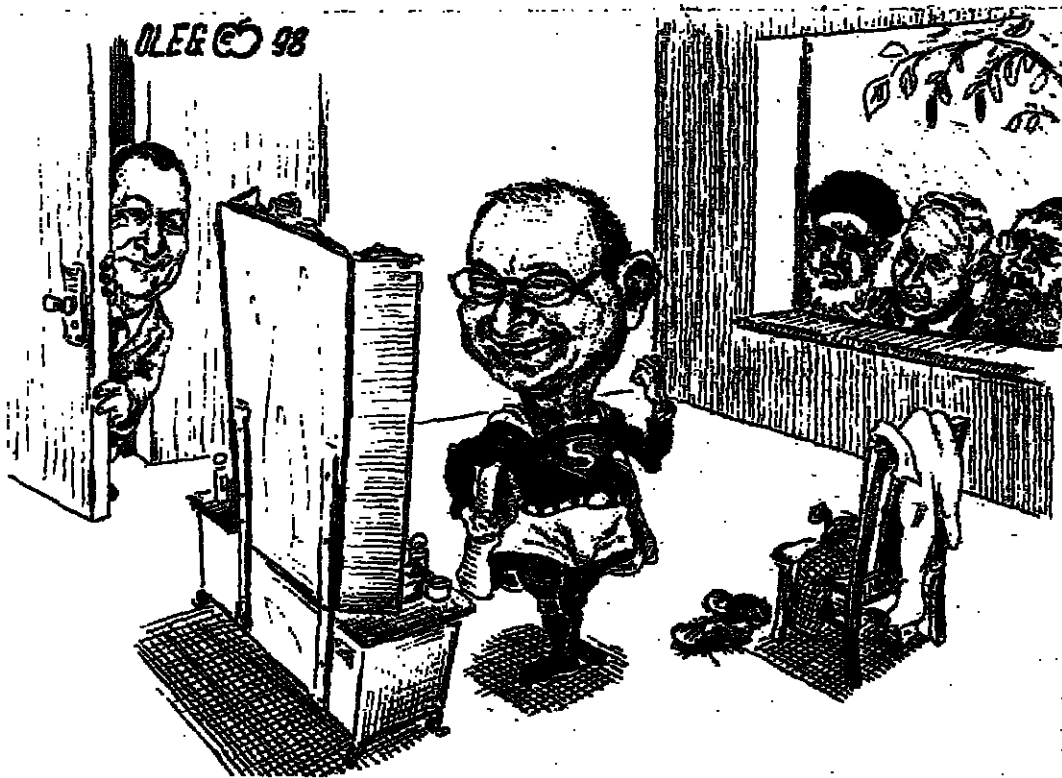
Milo has decided that the political wind that will fill his sails is that of the "culture war." Improbably, he claimed that the haredi attempt to modify a performance by the Batsheva dance troupe in the Jubilee Bells gala was what finally pushed him over the edge into abandoning the Likud and forming his own party. By launching his party under the flag of opposing haredi coercion, Milo has certainly struck a politically powerful chord, but one which hardly seems destined to contribute to his stated goal of national reconciliation.

It is also unclear whether Milo will succeed at becoming the standard bearer for the coveted center, and for the handful of independent-minded politicians who seem ready to spin off from the major parties. Likud rebels such as Dan Meridor and Ze'ev Begin may not join him, nor Labor rebels such as Haim Ramon. Rather, Milo might surround himself with unknown newcomers as did the fractious, flash-in-the-pan DMC.

Milo's challenge will be not to simply disappear into the political wilderness, as did former foreign minister David Levy after his surprise resignation. Further, suspicions are likely to grow that Milo was not as secure in Tel Aviv City Hall as Labor's fears led many to believe, and that Brig.-Gen. (res.) Ron Huldai — who as its principal turned around the Gymnasias Herzliya high school — could have given him a serious run for his money.

Milo, like his big-city colleague, Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, can fairly be accused of treating his city job as a launching pad for a national career without really having delivered on the municipal front. Both are talented politicians who have, chameleon-like, transformed themselves in their city's images. But Tel Aviv and Jerusalem deserve full-time mayors who, on the model of their predecessors, Shlomo Lahat and Teddy Koller, are not perceived as always pining for national office.

In a post-ideological age, planting a stake in the center will not be enough. Success in the municipal arena may be an ideal start, but only if one can point to a record of concrete accomplishments, beyond having a likable demeanor and a knack for jumping on this or that bandwagon. If Milo sinks into oblivion, the lesson for Olmert will be to keep his mind on creating jobs and cleaning streets in Jerusalem, rather than angling to keep himself on the national agenda.



## A win-win game

YOSSI BEILIN

Tomatoes stole the limelight at a conference held a few days ago, at the Hebrew University's Faculty of Agriculture in Rehovot, which debated the agricultural perspectives of the Oslo Accords.

Prof. Yonatan Bassi, former director general of the Ministry of Agriculture, who participated in negotiations held in Paris in 1994 in preparation for the signing of the economic agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, related in great detail the fears and anxieties felt by Israeli farmers before the market was opened to Palestinian produce.

The farmers demonstrated, called for the resignation of the negotiators, and sent telegrams to Paris announcing the end of Israeli agriculture.

Their primary concern was that cucumbers, tomatoes and the like would flood the Israeli market at rock-bottom prices, causing Israeli farmers, who were already growing at a loss, to stop growing vegetables altogether. Eventually it was agreed that the Israeli market would be opened up gradually to Palestinian vegetables in a process that would be completed by January 1, 1998.

As you may have noticed, this date passed so quietly that one was totally unaware of the fact that it was a milestone in the peace process. There were no demonstrations, no resignations were demanded and nothing was reported in the press.

It passed unnoticed simply because, as it turns out — according to Yonatan Bassi — this was a success story. There are now more Palestinian and Israeli tomatoes on the market. Palestinian farmers are pleased, even though their means of production severely restrict their ability to grow veg-

etables. Israeli farmers are satisfied as demand has increased and they are the only ones capable of adequately supplying the market.

Israel exports goods valued at \$2 billion to independently controlled Palestinian areas, whereas we import \$1 billion worth of goods from the Palestinians. In the sphere of agriculture too, we export twice as much to the Palestinians as we import from them.

The case of the tomatoes is further proof that the agreement between ourselves and the Palestinians can and should be a win-win situation. Both nations, which have conducted the longest-running conflict in history since the end of World War II, live together and to no small extent are dependent on one another.

They realize that if one nation suffers, this will have a direct impact on the other. The fear of Katyusha rockets fired from Gaza to Ashkelon, of the market being flooded by Palestinian tomatoes and other risks — is natural and must be overcome if we are to find 50 years of living by the sword.

ONCE in a while the prime minister suggests returning to Camp David in an effort to hammer out a solution there. Camp David is not a magical location at which political solutions are automatically revealed. In order to leave Camp David with a solution, it must be entered with a mutual desire to adjust positions.

Camp David cannot be effective as long as there is no agreement regarding the interim agreements, including the three redeployments, none of which has yet been implemented.

I believe that such a desire can lead to three redeployments being implemented by mid-1998, which together will include 50% of Judea and Samaria.

At the same time, it has been proposed that Israelis and Palestinians should sit together, preferably adopting an extremely low profile, in order to prepare the outline for the permanent-status agreement.

The groups will have to prepare declarations of principle and maps defining the proposed permanent borders. When these are ready and when both sides announce that these can constitute a basis for negotiations, despite the differences remaining between them, Camp David will be the right location for conducting these historic negotiations.

President Clinton will then be able to assist the sides in reaching those difficult decisions without which there can be no peace.

I do not know if the US will be willing to act as host in the summer of 1998, the eve of important congressional elections. It is hard to know if the president will want to involve himself in a process which bears a certain risk, as he prepares for the second half of his term, unless he is convinced that there is a real chance of resolving the Middle East conflict.

The countdown to the moment of truth is difficult for us all. The danger of an explosion in the event of no agreement by May 4, 1999 is also clear. The example of the tomatoes and the results of the win-win situation as well as many other such cases, must convince the sides that despite all the problems, the chances of success are greater than the risk of failure. Only then can Camp David serve as a place for peacemaking.

## Bring back Channel 16

YOSSI OLMERT

Israel's media industry has undergone major changes in recent years. In the old days, we had only one channel with just a few hours of broadcasting per day. Sports programs were there, but just barely, and we, the dedicated fans relied on the legendary Nissim Kiviti and his colleagues who gave us a glimpse of world sports.

Obviously, sports like rugby union, rugby league, cricket, baseball and American football seemed esoteric, so that only few, if any, cared to watch them. Soccer was king, particularly the English league with its on-going drama and excitement.

It was during these days that Israelis like me became familiar with the likes of our beloved Arsenal and other big English teams. Years later, I spent some time in London, and every two weeks I made Highbury a home, with the Irish trio of David O'Leary, Frank Stapleton and Liam Brady in charge and Islington, Tufnell Park and Kentish Town as the supporting and loving neighborhoods.

When I became familiar with the "a game for bootlegs played by gentlemen," a.k.a. rugby union.

In those days, it was tiny Wales, not mighty England which provided the big names and drama. Gareth Edwards was the caesar and the Five Internationals were my favorite tournament, occupying my full attention come January.

## Limor Livnat has to intervene

Back in Israel, we still had to exclusively watch Channel 1, with its reliance on our boring soccer, the more exciting Maccabi Tel Aviv basketball team and English soccer. In the meantime, the English-speaking community in Israel grew steadily, and those sports, that once seemed so out of touch to most Israelis became more fashionable.

THE real change occurred when we finally became a normal western-type country, with more than one channel. Cable television invaded our lives, and suddenly we could watch exactly what we wanted.

We received ample supplies of soccer, NBA basketball and also other somewhat marginal but immensely beloved sports, such as rugby. This came exactly when the sport turned pro, received an influx of big money and became the exclusive domain of the big power houses such as England, France and the great teams of the Southern Hemisphere, the Springboks, All Blacks and Australia. Long gone are the good old days of Wales, Ireland and Scotland, but rugby at large is flourishing and continues to prosper and develop.

We in Israel were fully aware of all this thanks to a cable channel, Channel 16. But then, in one arbitrary decision, we were deprived of our natural and indisputable right, and Channel 16 closed down.

I am not aware of the real reasons, nor the official excuses behind this decision. In fact, I don't really care, as I feel that something fundamentally wrong happened. The basic idea behind the licensing of the cable industry, was to allow all segments of the population to enjoy what they really like to watch.

So we got Indian, Turkish, Italian, Spanish and English-speaking stations, and sports channels, but the one channel which really catered to the needs of an ever-growing audience of sports fans who are mostly, but not only English speakers, was abruptly shut down.

This could not have happened to another channel without a massive and noisy reaction, the sort of which Israelis are renowned for.

Restoring Channel 16 is very simple: Communications Minister Limor Livnat, who is in charge of the cable TV industry, has to intervene and the sooner the better. She may not understand the extent of the anguish and disappointment felt by many cable watchers, and if this is the case, the sufferers should make her aware of our predicament.

The way to do this is also very simple: telegrams and more telegrams of protest and demands to the minister. She will listen, indeed she has to listen, because in our days, politicians tend to be more attuned to public needs.

If the minister does not intervene, we can go to the lengths of withholding our monthly payments to the cable company until it takes the plunge and does something to bring back what we like and deserve: Channel 16.

P.S. Congratulations to Arsenal, the only reds whom I ever loved in my life.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### MIL0'S DUPLICITY

Sir, — At the Philharmonic in the Park, which I watched on television Saturday night, Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo announced that in protest of the censorship of the Batsheva dance sequence at Jubilee Bells, he would broadcast a video of the dance sequence that was censored.

Milo referred to the censorship as "the most serious thing ever to have occurred in the State of Israel." He then proceeded to broadcast the dancers, but only up to and including the removal of the dancers' jackets. No other article of clothing was shown being removed. Milo then commented: "And on this, there is censorship."

Next, we heard an Arabic songstress, who was to sing three songs, among them *Hakotel*, a song with both spiritual and religious reference to the Jewish devotion to the Western Wall.

I was very impressed that an Arab woman would sing this particular song, only to discover that she simply used her lovely operatic voice to accompany the orchestra, and sang none of the lyrics. I must admit that I regard this complete omission of the lyrics to a song as censorious.

Finally, Milo informed his audience that the event we were watching, which must have been planned weeks in advance, was an event in protest of the terrible censorship which took place at the Jubilee Bells.

I understand that Milo is running for office, and feels the need to garner votes, but surely such duplicity will not earn him favor with the more intelligent segments of the population.

JUDITH D. SCHMELL

Rehovot

### HYPOCRITICAL LEFT

Sir, — I cannot imagine the organizers of a 4th of July fete, held in the presence of the president of the US, agreeing to a performance in which dancers dressed as pious Amish disrobe to the strains of *The Old Ragged Cross*.

Nevertheless, I could see the Batsheva Dance Company reenacting their controversial haredi striptease on television on the condition they also remove *gabayot* to the sounds of a muezzin calling the faithful to prayer.

Another possibility would be for the secular-Left culture mavens to call for the release of Tania Susskind, who was sentenced to a lengthy prison term for posting a reprehensible caricature of the prophet Mohammed as a pig.

At the time of course, the Left declared that the sensitivities of a minority were more important than freedom of expression.

ZEEV GOLIN

Rehovot

### THANK-YOU BAT SHEVA

Sir, — We want to add our voice to those who supported the actions of the Batsheva Dance Company on refusing to accept the dictates of the Orthodox rabbinic authority and refusing to perform under compromising conditions at the Jubilee Bells event.

Our political leaders continue to buckle under the threats and pressure of the Orthodox leadership. It was truly refreshing to witness protest in action. Thank-you, Batsheva.

HONEY AND GENE STOLLMAN

Jerusalem

DAVID RUBINGER

Jerusalem

### WHO IS TO DECIDE?

Sir, — I was talking to a religious friend of mine about the Batsheva incident.

He in all sincerity asked why it "was such a terrific demand, for the sake of unity, to have the dance company agree to appear in such a way, that we all should be able to enjoy the evening."

For a moment I was touched by his argument and felt he had a point.

But then I remembered a Dan Shilon program, in which MK Shlomo Benizri felt compelled to leave the stage whilst a girl was

singing. Which was his right to do. But does it not follow, that at next year's Independence Day celebrations the demand will be made — again in the name of unity — that no female singer appear and thus offend the feelings of some? Or, God forbid, folk dancing has boys and girls dancing together?

Who draws the line? Who is to decide?

## FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: On May 5, 1933, *The Palestine Post* reported from Berlin on the further intensification of the Nazi anti-Jewish policy: intermarriage and conversion were prohibited, while professors like the Nobel Prize laureate, Fritz Haber, a converted Jew, was forced to resign his position together with nine other Jewish professors.

50 years ago: On May 5, 1948, *The Palestine Post* reported that Hagana forces in the Kfar Etzion bloc engaged strong units of Arab Legion troops — fortified with armored units and supported by Arab gangs — in a day-long battle. The International Red Cross reported that it had finally obtained the agreement of both

Jews and Arabs to create "neutral security zones" under its flag in about 55 percent of the area of Jerusalem. *The Palestine Post* explained that the publication of a two-page edition was due to frequent break-downs in the supply of electric power.

Alexander Zvielli

05/05/98



# Heading out to the authentic Africa



A group of intrepid Israelis are preparing to penetrate the Africa tourists rarely see. And while they're absorbing the wonder of it all, they'll be giving something vital back. Allison Kaplan Sommer reports

Tending her garden, 45-year-old Yehudith Schneider-Ezra of Moshav Hofit may look a picture of tranquil domesticity. But in just a few days this mother of three and university student will be on very different terrain: the jungles and deserts of Africa.

Schneider-Ezra is one of a group of Israelis who will embark Thursday on a trip that will take them to parts of the African continent few tourists get to see.

It all started when she opened the newspaper and read that Geographical Tours Company and UMI car importers were co-sponsoring "The Isuzu Challenge," an unusual 18-day off-road trek across three African countries. It didn't take long till she was hooked.

The odyssey will include 30 participants, half paying customers and half professional staff, including guides expert in fields such as ecology and the anthropology of Africa. Also going along will be technicians and medical personnel.

The organizers of the event were looking for hardy tourists with a taste for adventure; they weren't interested in taking just anyone who could afford the \$6,000 price tag.

Prospective participants were put through two days of rigorous tests in which their skills in navigation and jeep driving were assessed, as well as their ability to work together as a team.

Many of the participants attracted to the trip are jeep enthusiasts, who thrill to taking their vehicles off-road — like Schneider-Ezra, who drives a Land Rover jeep.

When she read about the trip, "It just grabbed me. I've always been interested in Africa, although I've never been there. One of the reasons I never went was because I had a vision of how to go about it. I was afraid that one of those standard, organized safaris to Kenya couldn't live up to my ideal. I wanted the wild Africa, not the beaten track already taken by thousands of tourists."

Schneider-Ezra says she was sure she was a good candidate. She is in good shape, works out twice a week, is curious about the continent and studies political science and international relations. She acknowledges that her husband is more apprehensive about the adventure.

"Listen, for a woman to go on a trip alone to a place like Africa, in the middle of the jungle for 18 days with strangers, is not going to make her partner completely comfortable. But from the moment I first heard about this trip, I knew I would do anything to be part of the group. Maybe it's a selfish thing to do, but I want to see what deepest Africa looks like. I couldn't just let the opportunity go by."

She is not afraid of the challenges ahead; her only worry is that the trip might not live up to her expectations. "I hope we will get to see African tribes that aren't just putting on a show for white people. I want a taste of the authentic Africa, even if it means being exposed to its problems, as well as seeing and experiencing its beauty. I hope I won't be disappointed."

It seems doubtful that the trip could disappoint. The journey will start on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean and head through the deserts of Namibia, then north to the Angolan border, home of the Himba tribe, considered one of the most interesting African tribes.

The group will then travel south-east toward Botswana, where there is a large variety of wildlife,



Participants in the Africa trip undergo testing in the Negev on (clockwise from top left) driving over difficult terrain; digging a stuck vehicle out of the sand; lifting a jeep without a jack; navigating in harsh conditions; changing a wheel.

including lions, zebra, and rhinoceros. They will then continue along the Okavango River Delta, which flows from the Angola Mountains to the Kalahari desert.

THE PROJECT is a unique combination of entrepreneurship, corporate promotion and public relations.

**"I wanted the wild Africa, not the beaten track... from the moment I heard about this trip I knew I'd do anything to be part of it"**

— Yehudith Schneider-Ezra, mother of three and university student

tions, plus a genuine desire to raise environmental awareness and respect for various ecosystems.

The organizers stress that funds for the trip are coming both from the travelers' fees and donations from the corporate sponsors, which will also support a project sponsored by the Namibian government and the World Wildlife Fund for Nature called "From Hunter to

Preserver." Its aim is to help Africans save their own environment by training former hunters from the tribes in the area to become conservationists.

Or, as the official description puts it: "...to become preservers of the resources they once took for granted and help build the economic base necessary for the continuance of nature sanctuaries and their indigenous people in the 21st century."

The Isuzu Challenge is the brainchild of Mula Yaffe, 63. Thirty years ago he founded the Geographic Tours Company, a travel agency organizing tours with an emphasis on nature and the environment. The company prides

itself on pioneering new destinations for Israelis determined to see every corner of the world.

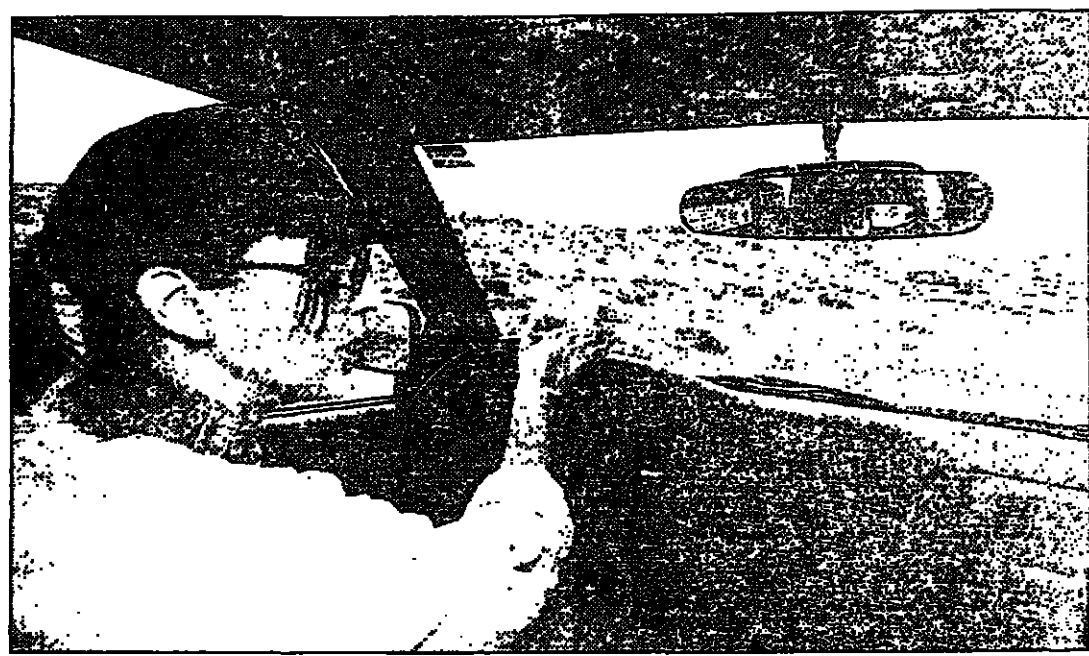
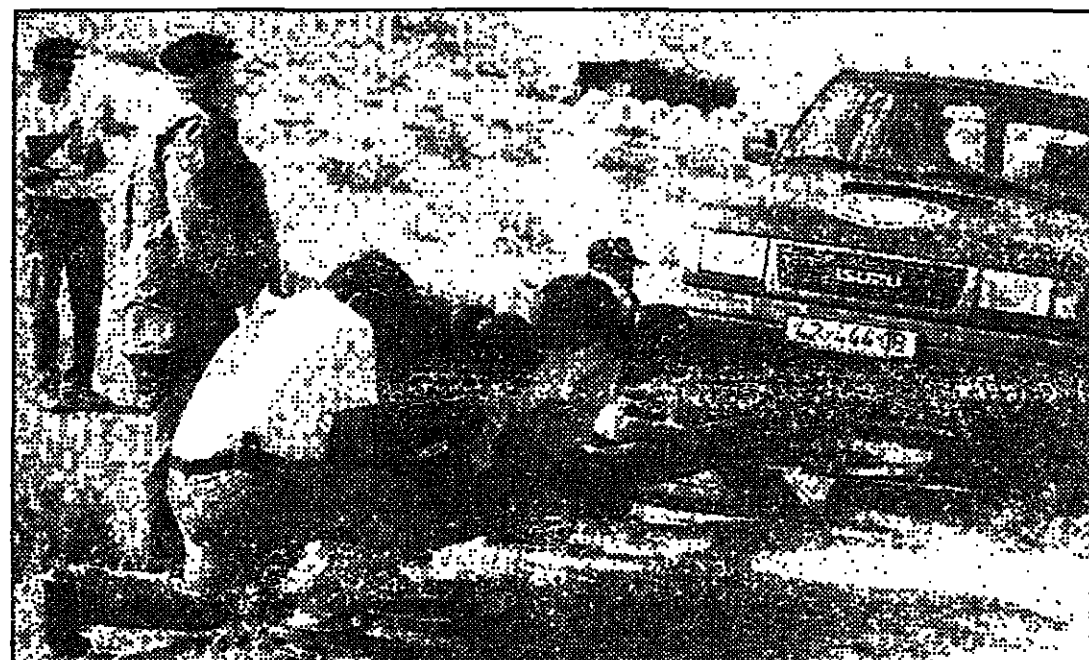
Yaffe says he was driven by twin desires: to take tourists to the more remote places he has traveled to alone, and to take on a project that could directly serve a higher purpose.

"I believe in good causes," he says, "but you can't promote a good cause without the financial means."

So, after coming up with the idea of a unique kind of trip, he approached various sponsors to make the idea financially viable. El Al, Ma'ariv and the Paz Oil Company all agreed to back the project, along with UMI/Isuzu, which is supplying the jeeps and pick-up trucks being used in the project.

The expedition will be fully wired for satellite communication with the outside world, and updates on their progress will be available on the Internet at the World Wide Web addresses [www.geotours.com](http://www.geotours.com) and [www.umi-4u.co.il](http://www.umi-4u.co.il).

"This will be different from our standard trips to Africa because we will be traveling to places that



a regular trip couldn't get to; and they are inherently more interesting for being less traveled." Yaffe says, adding that "there is an image of four by four jeep trips being anti-nature."

"We are designing this trip with the goal of conservation, leaving behind a donation to repair any

damage we might do," Yaffe stresses. His goal is to make this unique off-road venture into the wild an annual event, going to a different location each year. But he wanted to begin in Africa.

"Africa is my great love: I have

traveled in Africa for 30 years. When I land at the airport on my return to Israel, the first thing I want to do is go back. Anyone who has been there will tell you the same thing."

Yaffe says he was overwhelmed by the level of interest in Israel. More than 1,000 people inquired

recruiting participants from around the world.)

Tzipi Admoni of Haifa said she didn't find the tests too difficult. "We had to do things like rebuild part of a broken bridge, change a tire on a jeep without a jack or other equipment and other things like that. It was actually quite fun. I enjoyed it."

For Admoni, who owns two jeeps and, together with her husband, takes tourists on excursions inside Israel, "the element of helping to preserve the environment definitely attracted me to this particular trip."

The difficult part of the trip, she believes, won't be the challenges of the jungle as much as leaving her family behind.

"Deciding to go wasn't an easy decision. I have three daughters, one of whom is only two. My husband can't come along — he isn't up to the trip physically, so he will be babysitter."

"Everyone has been supportive, and even pushing me to go. Eighteen days is a long time to be away, but I see it as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I'm dying of curiosity," she grins. "I can't wait."

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## Dressing down

Once in a while, a letter to the editor of *The Jerusalem Post* cries out for a considered, well-thought-out response.

The following correspondence, from a concerned reader named Judith Weiss in New York City, appeared in this newspaper last week: "My husband and I returned from Tel Aviv, where we attended a wedding," she wrote. "We were shocked to see the young men come to this elegant affair in torn dungarees, flannel shirts and dirty sneakers... We were also shocked to see Knesset members appear on television airing their views, with no ties. In our opinion this behavior shows an utter disregard of respect for the feelings of others."

### Home Front



Allison Kaplan Sommer

"In my newspaper, *Newsday*, there is a column called 'Miss Manners.' She writes about proper etiquette for all kinds of occasions. This advice helps prevent insulting people....

"Your newspaper should have a column like Miss Manners so that people could be advised on proper attire and behavior on all

Anyway, trust me, Ms. Weiss. If you understood Hebrew, it is likely that the views the Knesset members were airing on those TV shows would have shocked you a great deal more than the clothes they were wearing.

Your suggestion to put an etiquette column in *The Jerusalem Post* doesn't seem the right solution to the country's fashion problems. After all, English-speaking readers of this newspaper are rarely the worst offenders in the field of fashion. We would probably be doing better teaching Israelis to dress well by example.

But, unfortunately, it seems to go the other way. Far more than influence our fellow Israelis to dress in a more elegant manner, we tend to succumb to the local penchant for casualness. The longer we live here, the sloppier we get.

We tend to abandon the tuxedos and formal dresses we may have brought when we moved here, digging them out of the closet only when it is time to attend family weddings or bar mitzvas back in the Old Country

**I'm not sure an etiquette column in this newspaper would solve the country's fashion problems**

kinds of occasions."

This letter really got me thinking. Since reading it, I've been pondering how properly to respond to Ms. Weiss (Miss Weiss? Mrs. Weiss? Time to call Miss Manners...)

I haven't really managed to come up with a comprehensive response to her suggestions, but I do have a few points on Israeli male sartorial habits that may help clarify the situation for her. One thing you probably didn't understand, Ms. Weiss, is that if these young men were wearing WHITE shirts - cotton, flannel, or polyester - they truly believed they were dressed up. You see, for men around here, any white shirt has been officially classified as formal wear.

"Never mind if the shirt in question is a polo shirt, a T-shirt, or a well-worn shirt, and never mind what the wearer has on from the waist down. If he's wearing a white shirt, an Israeli guy considers himself dressed up."

Frankly, I'm not sure if dressing Israeli men more formally on a regular basis would be such a good idea. Most of them are wound pretty tightly to begin with.

Can you imagine what it would be like if they had to walk around in the Middle Eastern heat all day with long-sleeved dress shirts, jackets and ties pulled tightly around their throats? True, in the case of Knesset members, a tie around the neck might prove useful: It could stem the words flowing from their gut directly to their mouth, forcing them to pause and think a bit before spouting their opinions.

(by which time, unfortunately, they usually don't fit anymore).

The bottom line is that most Israelis, particularly the men, hold their right to casual dress close to their hearts, viewing it as a national and inalienable right.

There are examples in my own family.

The reason my Israeli husband determined to pursue his law career in Israel and not in the US was based as much on comfort as on Zionist ideology. So what if he could earn more money in Manhattan than he could in Tel Aviv? He wanted to practice law in a country where a suit and tie were not an entrance requirement into the profession.

Yet, despite all the obstacles I have mentioned, we are trying to learn to dress better for you, Ms. Weiss.

You'd probably be happy if you checked out the offices of major companies. Many Israelis, male and female, are learning to dress more formally in the workplace. Suits and ties are becoming standard issue, particularly in the local branches of international companies, where there is a great deal of contact with visitors from abroad.

But still, it needs to be pointed out that in this high-tech era, some of the richest and most successful businessmen in the world don't have a clue about what to put on in the morning.

Look at the new computer-geek billionaires like Bill Gates. With their untucked shirts, jeans and sneakers, they look pretty much like... like those young men who so repelled you at the wedding.

# Jilted mistresses bent on justice

Like mushrooms after rain, the recent boom on Wall Street has sowed a crop of highly paid 'other women' - who aren't proving at all shy about filing lawsuits when dumped. Blaine Harden reports

Once you've got the swanky Manhattan apartment, the splendid beach house in the Hamptons and, still, your stock market dough keeps piling up, what do you invest in? A babe.

If the tabloids and the divorce lawyers are to be believed, mistresses (and male consorts) have become an integral part of Manhattan's dizzying bull-market affluence - as \$300,000 Lamborghinis, \$1,000 bottles of wine and \$28,000 Hermes crocodile leather purses.

Indeed, one Wall Street hedge-fund trader recently demanded in court, at the end of an affair, that his mistress give back a \$28,000 Hermes purse. She refused.

As prominent New York divorce lawyer Raoul Felder explains, "Mistresses are a direct function of the economy. There is no question about it. I can tell you how the economy is doing by how many mistresses come into my office looking for justice. I don't need no Greenspan."

Harriet N. Cohen, another prominent divorce lawyer, elaborates: "There are lots and lots of mistresses, that's for sure. But now there are lots and lots of women making millions of dollars on Wall Street. I have been made aware that they get themselves their own consorts. It goes with the money and the power."

The mistress meter of economic good times went through the roof last month as New Yorkers were treated to another in a series of front-page tabloid tales about a "leggy" young mistress, a "Wall Street sugar daddy" and how their lubricious good times have come to a heavily lawyered end.

The *Daily News* howled: "Russian Beauty Slams Wall St. Exec with \$3.5m Sex Suit." *The New York Post* lured readers to its four-story, two-page, love-nest package with: "The Kinky Tycoon: Ex-Model Files Dirt-Filled Suit." Both papers featured fetching photographs of an attractive young woman the *Post* called a "love-loot looker."

In the lawsuit filed in state court on Monday, former model Inga Banasewycz, 28, alleges that PaineWebber advisory director Orhan Sadik-Khan, 68, kept her

as his mistress for more than two years while making a number of lucrative promises.

"The defendant agreed to pay the plaintiff the sum of \$500,000 if she would not work and would remain at home so that the defendant could meet her at lunch time, or after work, for sex," according to court documents.

While charging that Sadik-Khan's "appetite for sex was insatiable," the court papers say that he insisted that Banasewycz "come to his house in (Old) Greenwich, Conn., so that they could engage in wild sex in his wife's bed." The suit also says that Sadik-Khan, who is married and has grown children, impregnated her twice and then persuaded her to have an abortion each time.

**'Mistresses are a direct function of how the economy is doing'**

- Raoul Felder, divorce lawyer

The legal grounds for the suit, according to Keith G. Rubenstein, lawyer for the jilted mistress, is that Sadik-Khan "breached an oral contract."

"He promised to pay my client \$500,000 and, in return, she gave up any opportunity to start a career, to start her own family and to travel to Europe," Rubenstein says.

Lawrence Hirsh, lawyer for Sadik-Khan, dismisses the suit as "frivolous. I expect we will be moving to dismiss these claims." Hirsh says his client ended a relationship with Banasewycz in 1995 and "he wanted to put the whole relationship behind him. She was making similar threats in 1995," Hirsh says.

"So he made a payment to her without admitting that he owed her anything. He agreed to pay her some money so that she would leave him and his family

alone. He made a payment - I am not going to tell you how much - and she released any claims she had."

The lawyer acknowledges, however, that his client and Banasewycz had "some dealings after that." The lawsuit focuses only on the relationship after 1995.

DIVORCE lawyers agree that a jilted mistress almost always faces a steep climb in trying to extract money from her former lover - especially if he is married.

Sadik-Khan's wife, interviewed at her post home in Connecticut, has told New York newspapers that she supports her husband and accused Banasewycz of trying to "ruin my family."

"Her probabilities of success are somewhere between nil and nonexistent," says Felder, who added that in 27 years of divorce work in Manhattan he has never seen as many jilted mistresses come through his office looking for settlements as during the recent boom on Wall Street.

Other divorce lawyers are not quite so pessimistic about the odds facing a mistress.

"The way women collect is using the concept of contract law," says Marina Tucker, a prominent divorce lawyer in Washington. "If he says 'I just want you available for me, just promise me you will be there all the time,' and she changes her life, then she may have a case."

But Tucker and other lawyers agree that a woman must show in court that her "consideration" in fulfilling her part of the contract is something other than merely giving him lots of sex. Tucker says a woman needs to prove that she did other tangible things, such as decorate his house, make his meals or entertain his business associates.

"Sex cannot be a consideration," Tucker says. "That would not be upheld by a court because sex for money is illegal."

If the divorce lawyers are right, then Banasewycz may be out of luck. As her own lawsuit explains, her sole responsibility in the affair with Sadik-Khan was "that she would be available to have sex with him whenever he wanted her." (The Washington Post)

## I'm caught in the middle

Dear Ruthie,  
My sister got married three years ago while she was living in the US with her boyfriend, who was studying there. When he got his degree they returned to Israel, where she immediately became pregnant. It was before her husband had a job, and my parents and her husband's parents were basically supporting them.

After the birth my sister's husband took a job he wasn't happy about, just so they could stop relying on their parents for money. When the baby was three months old my sister got pregnant again. She now has two children under the age of three. Her husband is still working in a job he hates, and has hardly any time to look for a better one.

Needless to say, they are not in great shape. I speak to my sister frequently, and she complains about how hard it is to take care of two babies - which, of course, it is. But she doesn't confide in me about her marriage, or tell me anything about how she's feeling.

The problem is my mother. Every day she calls me up and moans about my sister being extremely depressed and in need of help. She then demands that I persuade her to get help (i.e., therapy). When I ask my mother why she doesn't do it herself - if she feels so strongly about it - she answers that I can get through to my sister in a way she can't.

For my part, I have offered to help my sister in every way I can think of: I baby-sit, and I've even spoken to people who might be able to help my brother-in-law with his career. But I do not want to impose my judgment of my sister's emotional state on her. I can't get my mother off my back. She keeps making me feel that I am not concerned enough about my sister's mental health.

Interfering, or Interfered With  
Somewhere in Israel

Dear Bothered and Bewildered,  
Though others may try, the only person who can make you feel guilty is you. No one can make us feel anything without our full cooperation.

If you can keep this in mind whenever your mother pressures you to coax your sister into therapy, you will be a lot more at peace with yourself about not wanting to infringe on your sister's emotional privacy.

Furthermore, if you can actually internalize this concept, you will not only stop feeling guilty about your sister, your mother is likely to ease up on her demands.

As long as we are clear about the limits beyond which we are not willing to go, others will respond in kind.

Where your sister is concerned you are willing to offer certain kinds of assistance, yet unwilling to cross what you must be sensing is one of her limits.

Persuading her that she needs professional help constitutes such a limit. In any case, at this point in her life help with the children may be as valuable as therapy.

In the first place, your sister may not be what your mother terms "extremely depressed." In the second, even if she is depressed, without acknowledgment on her part and a genuine wish to be helped no amount of therapy will work.

A final point: Your mother's putting the responsibility on your shoulders may have something to do with her own feelings of guilt regarding your sister. Used to having you around as a willing recipient of her "baggage," she is just continuing a familiar pattern.

It is up to you to break it.

Letters should be addressed to: "Dear Ruthie," POB 81, Jerusalem 91000. For E-mail: [ruthie@jpost.co.il](mailto:ruthie@jpost.co.il) ("Dear Ruthie" also appears in *In Jerusalem* and in *City Lights* on Fridays.)

### Dear Ruthie



Ruthie Blum

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### GRAPEVINE

By GREER FAY CASIMIAN



Crazy about the cookies: Tipper Gore, left, with Reuma Weizman (Photo Noy)

Independence Day is always a busy time for the president, but never more so than this year. In addition to all the regular Independence Day events, Ezer Weizman also hosted a delegation of Mahal volunteers, invited US Vice-President Al Gore and his wife to lunch, and attended the controversial Jubilee Bells performance. While Weizman and Gore retired for a private chat, Reuma Weizman served coffee and cookies to Tipper Gore in the private residential section of Beit Hanassi. While keenly interested in the showcase of arts and crafts on display, Gore was absolutely captivated by the cookies - and asked for the recipe.

WHILE her sons Zali and Eli were taking care of the administrative and musical aspects of the Jerusalem Great Synagogue's Eve of Independence Day services, the effervescent, elegant and energetic Ella Jaffe was downstairs supervising the finishing touches to the congregation's annual dinner, which this year resulted in a record attendance of close to 700. There were so many extras that congregant Marana Reichman, who was a member of the organizing committee, kept directing strays without reserved seats to her own table, with the result that there was no room left for her.

Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert who was rushing from function to function, came in bareheaded, causing Vivienne Wohl, the wife of Great Synagogue president Maurice Wohl, to scurry discreetly around in search of a kippa for him.

But the person who worked hardest was singer Israel Parnes, who sang non-stop for nearly three hours and had the women dancing their feet off. The men were not quite as enthusiastic - or perhaps they simply didn't have as much stamina.

SOME 350 babies were born on Independence Day. Among them was Alon Beris, son of Jerusalemite Jana and Danny Beris, who celebrated his arrival at Hadassah-University Hospital, Mount Scopus. Another baby boy whose birth is eagerly awaited is the son of Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and his wife, Kochi. Expected to emit his first lusty cry in about two months' time, the infant has already received almost as much publicity as accorded to embryonic royals.

WHILE paying tribute to fallen Australian and New Zealand soldiers, Australian Ambassador Ian Wilcock observed that war is playing a diminishing role in the affairs of the world. Wilcock was addressing an unusually large gathering at the annual Anzac Day memorial ceremony at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in Jerusalem. Anzac Day, which initially commemorated Australian and New Zealand soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice in a failed campaign on the beaches of Gallipoli in April 1915, now honors the memories of all Australians and New Zealanders who served their countries in times of war.

Australian Defense Force Major General Tim Ford, the new commanding officer of UNTSO (the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization), Turkish Ambassador Baris Ozezer and visiting New Zealand parliamentarians Geoffrey Braybrooke and Phillip Goff were among the official wreath layers following an ecumenical service.

Braybrooke, who served in Korea, Malaysia and Vietnam, wore his medals and ribbons. Armenian priest Father R.E. Boghassian later laid a wreath of his own, presumably because Armenians traditionally don't do anything together with Turks.

Canadian Ambassador David Berger, who is Jewish, along with Wilcock and French Ambassador Jean-Noel de Bouillane de Lacoste, who are not, subsequently joined an impromptu Jewish service led by Reverend Shlomo Goldberg, who recited the prayers for the dead in front of a small cluster of Jewish graves.

ISRAEL BONDS founders Esther Hertiz and Teddy Kollek were honored last week by the Israel Bonds mega-delegation. Kollek received standing ovations both before and after he spoke. He eventually got the crowd to sit down when he said, "Please remember that for every clap of your hands,

you will have to buy extra bonds." In an address which dwelt more on the Israel Museum than on Israel Bonds, Kollek, without changing the tone of his voice, managed to slip in a gentle barb at those Americans who always know "what's best for Israel."

"You have in the US a problem with black people which you haven't solved in 250 years, and then you come to us and say 'When will you solve the problem with the Palestinians?'"

ANOTHER guest at the Bonds dinner at the Renaissance Hotel, Jerusalem, was Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon. He took the Bonds organization to task for its failure to commemorate his old boss Pinchas Sapir, who can be credited more than most other people with wooing foreign investors and setting the foundations for Israel's economic development.

"You can't celebrate Israel's 50th anniversary without mentioning Sapir," declared Tichon, who went on to punish the Bonds organization for its sin of omission. Acknowledging that speeches should be short if delivered before a meal is served, Tichon proceeded to speak for more than half an hour. Some people left to find solace in a restaurant.

IN ADDITION to celebrating the 50th anniversary of the state, residents of Jerusalem's prestigious 58-unit high-rise, the Pinsker building, celebrated the 25th anniversary of its completion and its initial occupancy. Penthouse owners Oded Rotem and Moshe Green, who were among the first people to move into the building, invited fellow residents to breakfast - not in their apartment but at the Sheraton Plaza hotel, of which Green is a part owner.

ISRAEL'S 50th birthday means more than entertainment spectacles. British philanthropist Vivien Clore-Duffield, through the Clore Foundation established by her late father, Sir Charles Clore, will distribute anniversary gifts next week to the tune of \$1.5 million in grants to 11 Israeli non-profit organizations, with the Israel Scouts, Tzofim, getting the big



Joyful mom with jubilee baby (Ariel Jerolimski)

piece of the pie.

Tzofim, the only non-partisan and politically unaffiliated youth group in the country, whose members include Jews, Moslems, Christians and Druse, will be given a \$1,000,000 million prize in recognition of its Garin R'eim project through which groups of post-high school volunteers donate a year before military service to communities in need. The prize will enable the expansion of the project.

CELEBRATING tremendous progress toward recovery is teenage victim of terrorism. Noam Rozenman who, together with his mother, Elana, is spending a 10-day vacation in France. Noam was badly injured in last year's bomb explosion in Jerusalem's Ben-Yehuda Mall and has spent seven months in hospital and in post-operative therapy.

A rift in the marriage of comedian Menachem Zylberman and his wife, Dorit, has reportedly caused the corpulent Zylberman not only to move out of the family home but also to move from Michmoret, where the couple have lived for many years, to a Tel Aviv penthouse. He's also planning to trim down and working Everybody Health Club, a popular venue for models and showbiz personalities who want to stay in shape. Is he hoping to woo Dorit back once he's a few kilos lighter?

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# BUSINESS & FINANCE

Tuesday,  
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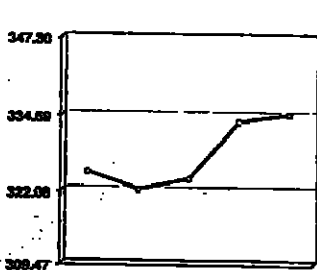
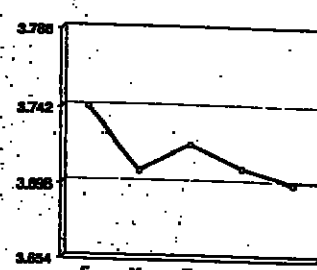
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## MARKETS

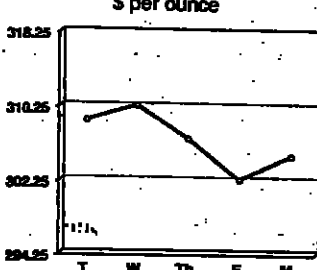
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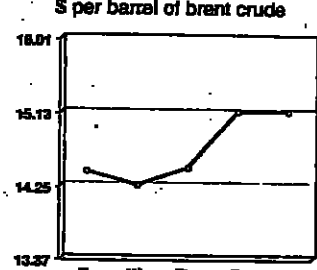
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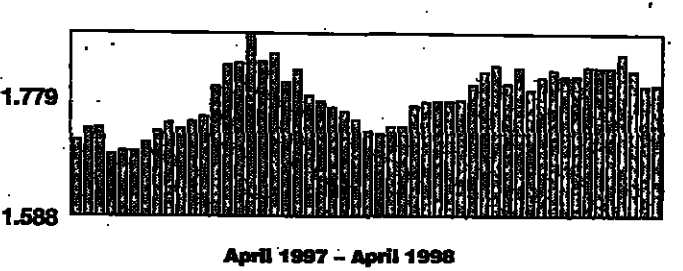
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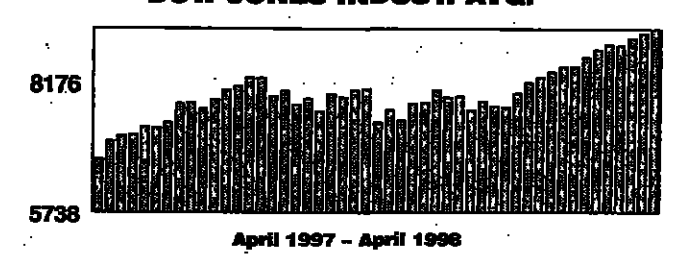
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## Gov't posts NIS 2 billion April budget surplus

By DAVID HARRIS

The government recorded a NIS 2.009 billion domestic budget surplus, excluding granted net credit, last month, according to initial figures published yesterday by the Finance Ministry.

However, a ministry statement reminded the public that the government spent relatively small sums in April because of the Pessah and Independence Day holidays. Furthermore, the state's coffers were bolstered by a one-off payment of NIS 1.4b. from Partner Communications, for the right to operate the third cellular telephone network.

Since the start of the year, the govern-

ment has posted a NIS 668 million surplus, excluding granted net credit.

The overall budget showed a NIS 2.112b. surplus, excluding granted net credit, in April and a NIS 267m. deficit since January.

For the entire year, the government has set a target budget deficit of 2.4 percent of the gross domestic product, which amounts to NIS 9.192b., excluding granted net credit, compared to last year's target of 2.8% of GDP or NIS 9.744b. During 1997, the government succeeded in cutting the overall budget deficit to 2.4% of GDP.

During April, the Treasury raised NIS 148m. domestically, received an additional NIS 226m. from privatization and saw an

NIS 2.479b. rise in bank reserves. Since the turn of the year, the government raised NIS 283m. in Israel, NIS 819m. from privatization, and the increase in bank reserves totalled NIS 1.125m.

The Treasury yesterday denied media reports that it has revised its 1998 unemployment forecast upwards to 9 percent. On Sunday, Treasury research head Tsipi Galyam said economic growth would reach 1% - 2% this year - the lowest level this decade - and admitted that growth will have to be considerably higher to allow for a reduction in unemployment, which is currently hovering around 8.3% or more than 180,000 people.

Several Knesset Finance Committee

members yesterday called for an urgent debate on the state of the economy, particularly the Treasury's plan to reduce unemployment, which was launched on Sunday.

Haim Oron (Meretz) accused the Treasury of excluding the committee from key economic debates. "It is unacceptable that the Finance Ministry continues to neutralize the committee when it comes to dealing with essential economic questions," he said.

Oron warned that the Treasury's plan will fall in the Knesset. Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman's plan includes an NIS 1b. infrastructure spending package through December 1999, with the aim of speeding up economic growth and creating jobs.

## Israel joins IDA

By NINA GILBERT

Israel has informed the World Bank that it plans to make a \$1 million donation to become a member of the bank's International Development Association, the government announced yesterday.

The donation, part of the IDA's 11th three-year replenishment, will make Israeli companies eligible to participate in tenders for IDA-funded development projects valued at \$6 billion annually.

"Israel would have started to be harmed from its absence from the organization," said Dan Catiarivas, the Finance Ministry's deputy director-general for international affairs. "The limitations against participation in tenders by non-members recently began to be more strictly enforced."

He said Israeli companies complained that they were being blocked from opportunities and the Industry and Trade Ministry asked that Israel join in order to exploit this untapped potential.

In addition, he said, "Israel is already a developed country and it needs to take responsibility."

In Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman's letter, sent a few days ago to World Bank President James Wolfensohn, Neeman also noted that Israel is especially pleased to be joining as it celebrates its 50th anniversary.

In the 12th replenishment, which begins next year, Israel may increase its donation, he said, noting that joining the IDA is a long-term commitment.

"It is a club of donors, once you join you don't leave," Catiarivas added.

Israel also is hoping that by entering the IDA it will earn membership in the OECD.

The IDA, part of the World Bank Group, has 159 member countries. Eighty countries, the poorest of the developing countries with per capita incomes of less than \$900, are eligible for the aid. Since they lack the financial ability to borrow from the bank on market terms, the aid is in the form of "credits," which are zero interest loans paid back over 35 to 40 years, with a 10-year grace period.

The 80 countries are home to 3.2 billion people, comprising 65% of the total population of the developing countries.

Industry and Trade Minister Nathan Sharansky said Israeli participation in international projects is an important factor in the expansion of Israeli exports. The presence of Israeli companies in the developing countries exposes foreign markets to their goods and services.

The IDA development projects include those to help with basic needs, such as food production, clean water and sanitation, health, family planning and education.

## Israel hoping to join EU's R&D program

By NINA GILBERT

The government is launching negotiations this week on entering the European Union's fifth research and development program.

The program starts in 1999, but negotiations on joining have been delayed by the government, which wanted to study the program's economic benefits.

The cost of the four-year program to Israel, which is an associate member, is some \$150 million for four years. Some \$14 billion in funds are offered through the program.

"Israel has already missed out to a certain extent, because the planning of the program began a year ago," said Industry and Trade Minister Scientist Orna Berry. "Israel could have had an earlier role in structuring the program. We don't make decisions on time."



United workers

The head of the Maritime Union of Australia John Combs (left) marches with sacked union dockworkers towards the main gate of Port Botany terminal in Sydney after the High Court dismissed an appeal against their reinstatement. The ruling is a setback for Prime Minister John Howard's government, which hoped to replace the 1,400 workers with non-union labor. (Reuters)

## IEC head: Gov't should sell 20% of company

By DAVID HARRIS

The government should sell 20 percent of the shares of the Israel Electric Corporation, its chairman Gad Ya'acobi said yesterday.

"My opinion is that the shares should be sold on the open market on the US stock exchange and in Israel and not to a single strategic investor," Ya'acobi told the Knesset Economic Affairs Committee. "This will allow the company to expand, leaving it as the Israel Electric Corporation, a single unit."

Ya'acobi estimated the flotation of 20% of the company would raise between \$2 billion and \$3.2b.

The sale, he suggested, would be the best means for IEC to raise its equity capital above its current 22-23%. The other options would be to raise tariffs and thus "dramatically increase profits," or that the government agree to invest additional equity capital, funded by the taxpayer or from privatization receipts from the sales of other companies. The latter, said Ya'acobi, is a highly unlikely alternative.

The company chairman said present capital levels are too low, especially given IEC's commitment to fresh annual investments of \$1.3b. - \$1.5b.

IEC director-general Rafi Peled then launched a strong attack on the Public

Utilities Authority - Electricity, under the chairmanship of Chaim Elata. Peled said the PUA-E is becoming too strong and is effectively making administrative decisions for the company, particularly in terms of restricting tariff levels.

"We can't do everything at once, when an external body imposes upon me all sorts of things I can't do in the timeframe set," said Peled. "We're already the most efficient company in the economy and even if we're second or third it's still something of which to be proud."

Tzvi Weinberg (Yisrael Ba'aliya) then challenged Peled to justify IEC employees' high wages and the free electricity supplied to its 10,000 workers.

Peled said it is unfair to compare IEC to other companies as staff are often requested to work around the clock every day of the year. He added that IEC wages were agreed with the Treasury. Workers across the economy, including MKs, receive various benefits, he pointed out.

"Why don't you make a law whereby all benefits in the economy are abolished?" retorted Peled. "Don't just do it to make a point."

He added that the company was the first one in the public sector to agree to a wage increase no greater than the inflation rate "to set the

benchmark."

Elata told the meeting he is unable to work with the IEC because its staff refuse to cooperate. Ya'acobi said there was no boycott of the PUA-E on the part of the company, but workers' committee chairman Yoram Oberkovitz said his members are refusing to speak to Elata and his team.

Elata said he is trying to establish the appropriate tariff for January 2000, but cannot access the relevant paperwork.

Seeing Elata under a barrage of accusations from management and workers, MK Avraham Poraz (Shinui) intervened, saying Elata "is doing his job in accordance with the law."

With the conclusion of the meeting, committee Chairman Avi Yehzekel (Labor) said he will invite Elata and the workers to a private meeting in a bid to bring their dispute to a successful conclusion.

IEC, meanwhile, yesterday announced that 10 of the 11 bidders for the contract to construct and operate a 370 megawatt private generation plant have passed the technical and environmental stage of the tender.

Those progressing to the next stage will have to submit their full proposals by June 3. The operator of the powers station must sell its electricity to IEC alone. The tender is expected to be awarded by September.

## High-tech VC funds raise \$578m. in '97

By DAN GERSTENFELD

Technology venture capital funds (VC funds) raised \$578 million in 1997 up from \$402m. a year earlier, according to the Israel Venture Association annual report, published yesterday.

The report, edited by the Giza Group, shows that by the end of 1997 VC funds and private equity funds, which are not limited to investing in high-tech, raised a total of \$2.1 billion, out of which 57% (\$1.2b.) was already invested, leaving some \$900m. for future investments. VC funds have invested, however, only 50% of the amount raised and are still holding \$740m. for further investments.

In addition to the 81 funds which are already active in Israel, another 12 private funds plan to raise an extra \$600m. for local investments.

The report also indicates that in 1997 only 22 Israeli companies raised money in public offerings in the United States compared

with 31 a year earlier. The amount of money raised by those companies was also significantly lower. \$743m. compared with \$982m. in '96. The decline in the number of offerings can be partly explained by US investors' preference for safer investments in '97. The figure is also in line with a general decline in the number of initial stock issues on Wall Street.

The findings also indicate the Israeli VC funds are getting larger. The number of funds which have raised \$50m. to \$100m. have grown substantially, while only very few funds were launched with \$25m. or less. One of the outcomes is that the biggest funds target mezzanine and late-stage investments, which tend to require more capital than early-stage companies.

Another new trend is that the size of capital raising rounds is growing, with more companies

raising relatively large amounts of capital - \$8m. to \$12m. - in each round of financing, thereby meeting their financing needs for longer periods. The authors note that in the past capital raising rounds typically yielded \$3m. to \$5m.

In addition, several new funds established in recent years have an association with leading US technology-focused investment banks.

The report includes the results of a survey conducted by accounting firm Kesselman & Kesselman indicating that at least \$429m. were invested by venture capital funds in 150 Israeli high-tech companies during the course of '97.

The leading industries which attracted the majority of investments were software (24% or \$103m.), communications (21% or \$91m.), and computers and electronics (21% or \$90m.).

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Tel. \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
Bank \_\_\_\_\_ Bank branch no. \_\_\_\_\_  
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(at which the company has its account)  
The tender documents and technical specifications will be sent, after receipt of a fax, as aforesaid.  
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### ISRAEL LANDS ADMINISTRATION

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Northern District

Build-Your-Own-House in Atula (Ha'aliyah and Sharrett Streets)

In the Geulim Neighborhood (26 plots in all)

The Israel Lands Administration, in cooperation with the Atula Municipality, is offering plots for the construction of homes, according to the conditions set out in the tender booklet. Registration will take place at the offices of the ILA, Urban Transactions Department, Government Center, Upper Nazareth on Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 8:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Tel. 06-855-8211.

One plot (for the construction of two houses) will be allocated to two disabled persons, as set forth in the tender booklet, who are Israeli citizens who have not previously won a plot in a draw. Twelve plots (for the construction of twenty-four houses) are being offered to the general public. Eligible for registration are Israeli citizens who have not won a plot from the ILA in a draw in the last ten years.

Disabled applicants must submit a declaration witnessed by a lawyer that they have not been won a plot from the ILA in a draw for building a home in the past. The text of the declaration is attached to the tender booklet.

Other applicants must attach a signed declaration witnessed by a lawyer that they have not been allocated a plot on which to build a home in the last ten years by the ILA in a draw. The text of the declaration is attached to the tender booklet.

Registration will open on June 1, 1998 at 8:00 a.m. and close on July 2, 1998 at 1:30 p.m. When registering, a bank guarantee or bank check for NIS 5,000, made out to the Israel Lands Administration, must be deposited against payment for the land.

The prospectus is available free of charge at the above office of the ILA from June 1, 1998. This notice is for general information purposes only and does not obligate the ILA in any way, either in terms of content or dates. The binding terms are those contained in the tender booklet and its appendices.

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## Building Blocks

By NINA GILBERT

## JERUSALEM AREA

■ The Di-Veroli Siani Company has sold a four-room 100-sq.m. apartment with a porch in the Italian Colony Project for some \$500,000. The company noted that a year ago it sold a similar apartment for \$450,000.

■ The US Consulate in Jerusalem has also rented a three-room, 150-sq.m. penthouse apartment in the complex for \$2,250 a month. The apartment has a Jacuzzi and central air-conditioning. The building has underground parking and a courtyard. The project, located in the German Colony, has 27 apartments, most of which have been sold to foreign residents. The Italy-based company, established in 1927, is owned by a Jewish family.

Yediot Aharonot has purchased an entire floor, comprising 600 sq.m., of the new Ashdod office building in central Jerusalem.

■ The project is being marketed by Anglo-Saxon, which also sold 160 sq.m. to Change Point for \$3,850 per sq.m. Several spaces were sold to lawyers at similar prices. A shoe shop and a café are each buying 100 sq.m. All of the shops in the building are expected to open in the next few months. The building, constructed and owned by the Tel Aviv-based Ashdod company, is opposite Zion Square and also has an entrance from Rehov Harav Kook. It has two floors for shops and five stories for offices.

■ In the Center 1 shopping center at the entrance to the city a 67-sq.m. office was rented by Century 21 to a haredi advertising office for \$28 per sq.m.

■ Gad Hevra Lebinayan and Shikun Ovdim have sold 20 cottages and penthouses in the Merom Mesusa project in Givat Mesusa for a total of \$7.5 million. Twenty units are still for sale in the project, with prices starting at \$280,000 for four-room penthouses and from \$320,000 for the cottages. Construction is expected to end in six months.

■ Also in the neighborhood, a four-room 100-sq.m. apartment on the first floor on Rehov Dolchin was sold by Anglo-Saxon for \$265,000.

## TEL AVIV and CENTER

■ Ten apartments were sold in the first month of marketing of the Mishkanot Ilan project, being constructed near Bar-Ilan University by Mashav, which builds for the religious public. The sales totaled \$2.4m. The project is to include 220 apartments

on a 44-dunam plot. Prices start at \$197,000 for 100-sq.m. three-room apartments and go up to starting prices of \$510,000 for six-room penthouses.

■ A two-room apartment on Rehov Yehuda Hamaccabi on the second floor without an elevator or parking was sold for \$165,000 by Century 21. The asking price for the apartment, in very good condition, was \$175,000.

■ The agency also sold a two-and-a-half room apartment on Rehov Ibn Gvirol for \$165,000. The second-floor apartment is renovated, but has no elevator or parking. The asking price was \$175,000.

■ On Rehov Rupin, near the sea, a three-room 85-sq.m. apartment on the first floor and in need of renovations was sold for \$258,000. The asking price was \$270,000.

■ On Rehov Sokolov, a two-room renovated apartment on the second floor was rented for \$670 by Century 21, while the asking price was \$700. According to the agency, rental prices are being reduced by up to \$100 due to the weak market situation. The drop is also due to the fact that owners are still asking high prices that could be fetched two years ago.

However, the agency noted that there are attractive rental properties that are receiving their asking price or even more.

## NORTH

■ The 'Keshet Ra'ayonot Company, which is building the "Across from the Winery" project in Zichron Ya'acov, is offering another 35 two-family homes. Each half has six rooms on 140 sq.m. and a 150-sq.m. garden, priced at \$223,000.

■ The company is also to build 12 buildings in the same style that are to be divided into four three-room apartments. The top floor apartments, with 80 sq.m. and a 10-sq.m. porch, are priced at \$148,000, while the lower apartments, with 100-sq.m. gardens are priced at \$158,000. The project has some 200 housing units in the eastern valley of the community.

■ Twenty-nine homes have been sold in a new neighborhood of 144 units in Tirat Hacarmel. The project, being constructed by Yuval Engineering, includes high-rise buildings and cottages. Apartment prices start at \$120,000 for buyers eligible for Housing Ministry mortgages, and at \$170,000 for penthouse apartments. Six-room cottages start at \$217,000. The area is becoming attractive to young couples, and high-tech companies are also locating in the commercial areas.

## The new force on the bourse

Foreign analysts demonstrated their influence over the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange last week by halting the four-month-long bank-shares rally

## MARKET WATCH

By DAN GERSTENFELD

One of the major changes in the local finance industry following the entrance of foreign investors to Israeli capital markets was the introduction of new analyses methods.

Industry sources consider the improvement in research quality the most important outcome of the exposure of the local market to research methods used abroad. Even though Israeli analysts must now compete not only with local colleagues but also with foreign ones, the majority of them sees this as a very positive development.

The full impact of the exposure of the local market to foreign analyses was illustrated last week when the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, which had been rising constantly since February, changed course immediately following the publication of a report by Merrill Lynch on the local banking industry. In the report, the US investment house lowered its purchasing recommendation for the country's two largest banks, which led to an overall decline on the TASE.

The Tel Aviv 25 index of blue chips has gained more than 22 percent since February, largely due to an average increase of some 36% in share prices of Israel's three largest banks, which comprise 23.5% of the TA-25 index.

WHILE foreign interest in local bank shares has increased, the majority of Israeli investors have shunned the stock market since the mid '80s as a direct result of the bank-share scandal. At that time, the government was forced to rescue the banks, taking control of the country's largest financial institutions. Thousands of investors, who were led to believe that banking shares would never fall, were faced with massive losses, some of them in debt to the very banks that advised them to buy the shares.

Much of the public has learned its lesson and has never returned to invest in stocks. The TASE is still seen by many as the equivalent to a sophisticated casino, in which some win but the majority lose.

Despite this and regardless of the public's dislike for banking shares, the stocks of the financial institutions were the main reasons for the recent rise in the local bourse.

Foreign investors never heard of the banking crisis and frankly did-



n't care about it. They only discovered the bank sector's potential earlier this year after an investors' group led by Ted Arison bought a controlling stake in Israel's largest bank, Bank Hapoalim.

The sale marked a real change in foreigners' attitudes toward Israeli banks. Foreign investment houses started covering them with much enthusiasm. Hopes that the sale of the remaining government holdings in Bank Leumi and Israel Discount Bank would turn them into more efficient bodies were the main force behind the recent rise in all stock indices. The rise in the banks' share prices also supplied the fuel needed to drive the recovery of the bourse, which showed only little signs of life since the breaking of the Asian turmoil last year.

The influence of foreign analysts came to light last January when Merrill Lynch ranked Israeli banks first among emerging European banks. In a report on the local banking sector, the US investment house said: "We think the Israelis are now the best value by far among emerging European banks and are also attractive in a mainstream European context."

At that time, Merrill estimated that Israeli banks were trading at a 25% to 30% discount below fair value. The investment house added that "We believe that the market does not appreciate the

significantly approved fundamental profitability achieved by the largest banks, Hapoalim and Leumi, in the last three years."

The investment bank attributed Israeli banks' attractive valuations to market failure: "In our view, the banks are overlooked by international investors and misunderstood by domestic shareholders. We believe a modest re-rating is overdue and that it is only a matter of time."

The impact of the report was not evident immediately, but within a month of its publication bank shares started surging. With Bank Hapoalim rising 37% since February and Bank Leumi gaining 32%, local investors rushed to join the party.

Another force adding to investors' interest in bank shares was the sharp rise of Israel Discount Bank, which rocketed 39% during the last three months.

Unlike Leumi and Hapoalim, which rose on expectations for higher profitability, Discount is considered to be the least efficient among Israel's three largest banks. With an intensifying workers' dispute which threatens its future, Discount seemed to be more of a speculative investment.

But, just like other speculative investments, when you win, the payoff is big. Out of nowhere appeared a mysterious investor, who started purchasing Discount

shares in a number of off-the-floor transactions. This investor, whose identity still remains unknown, wishes apparently to improve his position ahead of the planned sale of Discount in the institution.

It should be noted that the sudden appearance of the mysterious investor only added interest to bank shares, which just began to enjoy the higher activity of foreign investors for the first time this year.

With banking shares rising constantly, investors started believing that this is the beginning of a new trend. But, Merrill Lynch, which was the main contributor to higher interest in Israeli banks, was also the one to announce the end of the party. A second report on the local banking industry issued on April 21 marked the sudden end of banks' shares rally.

Merrill, which lowered its recommendation on Leumi and Hapoalim to "neutral" and "accumulate," respectively, was the main reason for the sudden change in investor mood.

The impact of the US investment house was even more evident as it came only a few days after two of Israel's leading investment institutions published reports recommending bank shares. Sahar Securities maintained its "buy" recommendation for Bank Leumi and Bank Hapoalim, while Zannex

Securities reiterated its "buy" recommendation for Hapoalim and its "strong buy" recommendation for Bank Leumi.

Within minutes after the publication of Merrill's report, investors started selling shares of Bank Hapoalim and Leumi, reversing earlier gains.

"We do not expect a strategic sale in 1998" of Bank Leumi "and hence would not expect Leumi's shares to benefit from privatization expectations in the way in which Hapoalim's did during 1997," said Merrill analyst Denise Holte. The reaction to the report was sharp and swift with Hapoalim and Leumi falling more than 4% in three days.

Local analysts, who stick to their former recommendations, say that bank shares will continue to rise in the future. According to them, the lowering of Merrill's recommendation was only the trigger to some profit taking.

Whether the recent decline in bank shares is only a much needed correction or the end of the current rally is not yet evident. It is clear, however, that local investors are heading the advice of foreign analysts, which demonstrates the respect they have earned in the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

This might be another indicator that the Israeli economy is well on its way to integrating into the world financial system.

## The yen: Junior partner or dollar rival?

As the age of the euro dawns, analysts are debating whether Japan's once-mighty yen is destined to slide to the margins of world currency trading. Linda Sieg reports

TOKYO - Japanese investors may welcome - and some authorities envy - the advent of the euro as a potential rival to the almighty dollar.

But many seem resigned to the prospect of Tokyo's home-grown yen remaining a junior partner in any new currency regime for the foreseeable future.

Japanese experts say the euro has a good chance to emerge, though perhaps not quickly, as a credible alternative to the dollar as an investment target.

"It's a big problem for the US government," said Tetsuji Murase, general manager of Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi's research division.

"They doubtless feel a chill in their hearts... until now all they had to do was to print dollars and people would buy them."

Private Japanese investors as well as the nation's central bank may well shift some holdings out of US Treasuries into bonds denominated in euros, experts say.

"At present almost all our (central bank's) foreign reserve holdings are in US Treasuries," said Kosuke Nakahira, a former

Japanese vice-finance minister for international affairs. "In the future, there is a possibility of an alternative if the euro is a good, strong, reliable currency."

Japanese internationalists would like the yen to play a more prominent role on the world's financial stage, and some ruling party politicians are urging measures to promote that through reform of Japan's money market and tax regime.

But many appear resigned to a junior status for Japan's currency, especially while the nation's own economy is stalled and its financial sector burdened by bad loans.

"It's a Japanese problem. With the economy falling apart and the financial system problems unresolved and... the resolution to structural problems likely to be put off, the status of the yen will remain low whatever happens to the euro," said Nikko Research Center economist Hajime Saito.

Longer-term reforms may give the yen's global status a bit of a boost, but are unlikely to award it a starring world role.

"If the 'Big Bang' succeeds and the economy escapes from slow

growth, Asia more generally recovers and Japanese banks grow strong, the yen will have greater weight," Murase said.

"But it will still rank third - discussions of a 'yen bloc' are nothing more than talk," he added.

DISTRACTED BY a bad loan hangover at the nation's banks, the threat of tougher competition at home as deregulation proceeds, a stubbornly stagnant domestic economy and worries about turmoil elsewhere in Asia, Japan has not been giving the euro its full attention.

Japanese banks and other financial firms especially have been bogged down in a plethora of woes close at hand - a few big exceptions aside - have hardly given the euro pride of place in their forward planning, bankers and other experts say.

"The first priority for Japan is to achieve greater stability in its own internal economic and financial situation," said Brian Quinn, chairman of Nomura Bank International.

"I think the outside view is too impatient. The first priority is to

get your house in order, then I think that horizons will widen."

A tendency to shy away from hypothetical possibilities at first kept many banks from aggressively preparing for business opportunities the launch of the euro might provide.

"Until recently, they wondered whether the euro would really be launched... so their decision-making has been delayed," Hideki Hayashi, chief economist for Europe at the Japan Center for International Finance (JCIF), told Reuters.

He said that banks had their hands full with 'Big Bang' reforms at home and the Asian financial crisis.

That said, financial and other firms are finally facing up to the fact that the euro will go ahead. "Japanese treated the EMU as an interesting theoretical proposal until the middle of last year," said one diplomat.

"There has been a considerable increase in interest in the technicalities since then."

Having negotiated the rocky path to the end of their business year on March 31, 1998, firms with European operations could turn their attention at least to the minimum preparations needed to adapt to the euro.

But the gap between those pack leaders and laggards is likely to widen as a handful of Japanese financial firms pull ahead of their domestic rivals.

"European institutions are clearly ahead - it's their money. But Japanese institutions have done their homework, and you can trust the big ones to offer interesting euro products," the diplomat said.

Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi, Japan's largest bank, says it is committed to leading the Japanese pack. "We decided from the start that we would be second to no other Japanese bank when it comes to the euro," Murase said.

"There will be a shift in focus on how to provide efficient capital procurement and asset manage-

ment. Banks will have to respond to such customer needs and the gap will widen (between those that can and cannot do so)," he added.

Financial experts said giant Japanese brokerage Nomura Securities Co. Ltd. was also likely to be among financial institutions aggressively eyeing euro-business, although some Nomura executives have said their firm is taking a more circumspect approach than many US investment banks.

FOR MANY non-financial firms as well, Asia and the United States remain firmly at the top of their overseas agendas.

"For many Japanese firms, it's the United States first and then Asia and only after that, Europe," said Nikko Research Center's Saito.

"What they are worried about most now is Asia, which takes 40 percent of their exports." Still, blue-chip Japanese multinationals are clearly taking the single currency into account when forging their strategies and investment decisions.

"For companies already present in Europe, the issues are what is the impact on their financial system, and on production, sales and distribution networks," Murase said. "Leading corporations like Sony are moving ahead on these issues because they are competing on the same level as European companies."

While some overseas pundits fear the single currency could usher in an era of slow European growth, Japanese experts said the ultimate result could well be a more vibrant economy which attracts more investment from outside.

"The euro is a good thing for outsiders because Europe becomes an even market - you just open one door and many doors will open," said Kazuo Nukazawa, a former senior managing director at business lobby Keidanren (Japan Federation of Economic Organizations).

(Reuters)

## THE CONFERENCE CIRCUIT

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

**5.5** The Kibbutz Seminar College in Tel Aviv will host a lecture by educational psychologist Chaim Amit on Parents, Adolescents and Motorcycles. The focus of the lecture is to help parents deal with the risks motorcycles pose to their children.

**5.5** Papers on medical research, ethics, politics, sociology, public administration, tourism, labor relations, demography, economics, defense, education, democracy and environmental issues will be delivered at a three-day multidisciplinary conference to be held at Haifa University.

**5.5** The Israel Venture Association, together with the Giza Group, is sponsoring a conference on Assessing the Equality of High-Tech Companies. The venue is the Tel Aviv Hilton.

**5.5** Prof. Stanley L. Witkin will be the keynote speaker at a Haifa University conference in the gallery of the Hecht Museum. He will speak on Methodological Considerations in Social Work Research and will offer some "irreverent proposals" in rethinking social-work research and evaluation.

**6.5** Religion and Income and Pilgrims as a Source of Tourism are two of the subjects listed for the Jerusalem Research Institute's wide-ranging seminar on the Sanctity of Jerusalem, which will be held at the Bible Lands Museum.

**7.5** Harvey Prize laureate Prof. Richard M. Karp will speak on Computation as a Tool for Understanding the Genome at the Technion's Sago Auditorium. The lecture is being held under the aegis of the Technion's Faculty for Computer Sciences and the Harvey Foundation.

**10.5** Women parliamentarians and women running in the upcoming municipal elections in Jerusalem will participate in a conference on Women in Israeli Politics, which is being sponsored by the Coalition of Women's Organizations at Hechal Shlomo, adjacent to Jerusalem's Great Synagogue.

**10.5** British Week will open at the Tel Aviv Museum and the surrounding Shaul Hamelech square and will continue for five days. It will include free fashion shows featuring creations by top British designers such as Ben de Lisi, Betty Jackson, Jasper Conran, Zandra Rhodes, Ghost, and Red or Dead; an award winning brass band which will play melodies from London's top West End shows; a film festival with a variety of recent British productions; a typical British High Street with a wide variety of consumer products and replicas of Marks & Spencer, Speedo and the Sports Pub; a football match and a life-size model of the Thrust - the fastest car on Earth. There will also be a wide range of conferences and seminars on subjects pertinent to trade relations as well as investing in UK commercial property, and the legal implications of the new Arbitration Law.

**10.5** Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi, Supreme Court President Justice Aharon Barak, Prof. Irwin Cotler, co-chair of the Canada-Israel Cooperation Program: Justice, Rosalie Abella of the Ontario Court of Appeal; Prof. Alan Dershowitz of Harvard Law School; and several other legal experts from Israel and Canada will present papers at Tel Aviv University at the three-day Canada-Israel Law Conference on Litigating the Values of a Nation.

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Electro Chemical Ind.	6.75	
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Integrated Technology	1.375	
Israel Containers Sys	7.5	

## NASDAQ

Company	Revenue	Profit
3M	4,125	+0.1%
Autodesk Software	0,375	0
IG, Associates	0	0
Imagin	12.75	+0.1%
Imperial	16,825	+0.1%
Intergraph	3,625	0
Key Advertising Ltd	1,597.5	+0
Miller Online Systems	8,665	+0
Parsons Technology General	5,575	+0
Perceptics	12.4	+0
PhotoVision Software	3.3	+4%
Proton	3,312.5	0
Realtime Technology	0	+2%
Research Systems Software	18.4	+0
S.P.S.G. Group	-21.5	-0.1
S.P.T. Tech	6,665	+0
Siemens	1,597.5	+0
Si Systems Software	31.625	+0
Telecom	1.1	+0
Tecnot	3.375	+0
Transo Fuel	3.375	+0.1%
Techniques for Imaging	19.125	+0
For Systems	7,000.75	+0
Electronic Data Systems	21,125	+0.1%
For the Medical Imaging	8.25	+0
For the Systems Ltd	14	-1
For the Circuits	1.75	+0
General Systems Developers	5,912.5	0
For the Medical Systems Ltd	32.375	+0
For the Vision Systems	3.75	+0
For the Systems	0.5	+0
For the Systems (1982)	41.75	+0
For the Systems (1989)	3.75	+0

Insoll Ltd	18.375	+0
Indisch	21.5	+0.5
Allen	32.25	+1.3

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NYSE	
Bo. Comm	15.375 -0.3

S.P. Communications .....	16.3125	-0.1
.....	7	+0
First Israel Fund .....	13.8125	+0
IEC Israeli Economic Corp .....	23.8125	+0.1
.....	25.5625	-0.1
Insula Inc .....	17	-0.3
Super-Sol Ltd .....	16.1675	+0.2
.....	38.5625	-0.2
.....	26.125	-0.8

SOURCE: S&P COMSTOCK (DATE 4-MAY-98)

## LONDON

InterActive Media	145.5	+0
EA Multimedia	4.5	+0

SOURCE: S&P COMSTOCK(DATE 4-MAY-98)

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# INTERNATIONAL SHARES

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NEW YORK 48.4375 +01

MR Corp	149	-0.8
SA	25	+0.1

Company	Price	Change
Verizon	79.3	+0.3
Verizon Micro	24.5	+0.1
Verizon Fd	82.05	+0.05
Verizon Hld	20.81	+0.2
Ver	69	+2.4
Verizon	77.9525	+0.05
Verizon	98.975	+0.05
Verizon	77.5625	+0.05
Verizon	47.75	+0.3
Verizon	44.625	+0.05
Verizon	73.9375	+0.05
Verizon	49.0575	+0.05
Verizon	58	+0.5
Verizon	21	+0.5
Verizon	47.25	+0.1
Verizon	104.43	+0.05
Verizon	57.875	+0.05
Verizon	47.125	+0.05
Verizon	34.825	+0.05
Verizon	19.1875	+0.05
Verizon	1.108	+0.05
Verizon	22.875	+0.05
Verizon	52.0625	+0.05
Verizon	37.1375	+0.05
Verizon	44.125	+0.05
Verizon	30.9125	+0.05
Verizon	54.0625	+0.05
Verizon	45.9375	+0.05
Verizon	57.125	+0.05
Verizon	22.75	+0.05

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# TASE rises led by Bezeq

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Yehuda Tel	36.4376	-0.3125
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## FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

Sal (Bank)	1.0000	0.0000
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## NEW YORK MARKET INDEXES

DJ Industrials	9182.85	+5.59
DJ Transp	3091.19	+15.77
DJ Util	284.13	+0.57
DJ Comp	2912.25	+12.78
DJ Energy	278.53	+1.75
DJ Health	277.49	+1.71
DJ Tech	277.49	+1.71
DJ Retail	277.49	+1.71
DJ Food	277.49	+1.71
DJ Drug	277.49	+1.71

## OTHER MARKET INDEXES

FTSE 100	2841.3	+0.57
FTSE 100	2841.3	+0.57
FTSE 100	2841.3	+0.57
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FTSE 100	2841.3	+0.57
FTSE 100	2841.3	+0.57

## DOLLAR CROSSRATES (US)

Poundsterling	1.6667	+0.0025
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## US COMMODITIES

Cocoa (May)	1.886	+0.14
Cocoa (May)	1.886	+0.14
Cocoa (May)	1.886	+0.14
Cocoa (May)	1.886	+0.14
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## LONDON COMMODITIES

Cocoa (May)	1.886	+0.14
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## SPOT MARKET METALS (US)

Silver spot	6.26	+0.11
Silver spot	6.26	+0.11
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## NEW YORK METAL FUTURES

Gold (Apr)	328.3	+0.25
Gold (Apr)	328.3	+0.25
Gold (Apr)	328.3	+0.25
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## LONDON METAL FIXES

Gold AM fix	306.1	-4.5
Gold PM fix	306.9	-3.8
Silver AM fix	57.5	-1.5
Silver PM fix	57.5	-1.5
Platinum AM fix	1000.0	+0.0
Platinum PM fix	1000.0	+0.0
Palladium AM fix	1000.0	+0.0
Palladium PM fix	1000.0	+0.0
Copper AM fix	1000.0	+0.0
Copper PM fix	1000.0	+0.0

## SOURCE: SAP COMSTOCK/DATE 4-MAY-98

## Tel Aviv

Stocks rose to a record yesterday, led by Bezeq Ltd., after the state-run telephone company was rated "buy" at Zannex Securities.

Bezeq gained 3 percent to NIS 11.04, helping the Maof Index of 25 largest companies to gain 0.37% to 334.69. The telephone company is expected to remain a market leader in local, international and cellular phone service even though it is facing new competition in all three areas, according to Zannex, which was repeating its rating on Bezeq.

The report set a 12-month target price of NIS 12.5 to 12.7 for the company.

"Management's restructuring plan will lead to significant savings in salary expenses," analyst Tal Liani said.

Bezeq shares also are trading at lower prices than telephone companies elsewhere, Liani said.

Stocks also got some help from expectations US shares will gain, since a lot of Israeli companies are traded in the US.

Among stocks that gained were Elbit Systems, which rose 1.4% to NIS 50.9. The maker of defense systems said a subsidiary received a contract from Lockheed Martin Corp. to provide helmet information systems for the US Air Force's F-22 Raptor aircraft.

Ma'ariv Holdings gained 3.5%

to NIS 23.7 and its parent company, Israel Land Development Co., rose 4.5% to NIS 23.3. The companies said they are conducting negotiations with two investor groups interested in buying a stake in a holding company that controls the Ma'ariv daily newspaper. The newspaper's parent, reported that cosmetics heir Ronald Lauder agreed to buy 30 to 25% of Ma'ariv at a price valuing the company at NIS 500 million.

Solel Boneh Building and Infrastructure Ltd. gained 0.9% to NIS 44.6. The construction company is expected to profit if the government adopts a Finance Ministry proposal to increase investment in infrastructure projects to spur growth, traders said.

European stocks rose after European leaders this weekend officially named the 11 nations that will adopt the euro, which is expected to cut costs for companies.

## Europe

In Paris gains were led by Schneider SA, which sells about 60 percent of its electrical equipment in Europe, and by consultants such as Altran Technologies SA and Atos SA, whose services will be needed for the conversion to the euro January 1.

The benchmark CAC 40 Index rose 93.33 points, or 2.4%, to 3974.25. The French market was

## STOCKS

closed Friday. The SBF80 Index of mid-sized stocks gained 69.69 points to 2816.19, its biggest one-day rise this year.

"Last week, investors were looking for a reason to sell, like worries the euro would be delayed or some countries might be excluded, or that US interest rates could rise," said Laurent Imbert, who helps manage about \$500 million in equities at Orfivamo. "Those reasons have all been disproved."

The CAC has risen 6.4% since Thursday, when a US report pointed to strong economic growth without inflation.

Schneider rose 28.7 francs, or 6.4%, to 478.7. Its rise pushed the CAC index up 4.68 points.

Altran Technologies, an engineering consultant, rose 131 francs, or 13.7%, to 1,090. It also was helped by the forecast of Chairman Alexis Kniazeff, who

said in weekend newspaper *Investir* that the engineering consultant expects sales to more than triple to 6.5 billion francs in 2002.

Meanwhile, German shares rose led by Veba AG. The DAX Xetra index rose 96.53 points, 1.84%, to 5337.75. Twenty-four shares rose and six fell.

"On one hand, we are catching up with the US and on the other hand the euro decision, though expected, pushed the market in a positive direction," said Udo Becker, an equity salesman at Merck, Finck & Co. in Munich.

"The decision stirred intense discussions, but I don't have the impression that they affected the market," said Gisela Massoth, a trader at Bayerische Landesbank Girozentrale in Frankfurt.

The Veba gained after a large investment bank raised its target price for the stock, traders said. Veba, Germany's largest utility, climbed 6.9 marks to 126.4. Among other gainers, Metro AG, Europe's largest retailer, surged 4.57 marks to 93.97.

Traders said the consumer sector benefited from analysts' recommendations amid positive earnings. Metro reported last week first-quarter sales rose 51% to 19.79 billion marks from 13.1 billion marks a year earlier after its \$2.7 billion acquisition of the warehouse stores of SHV Makro NV and other businesses.

(Bloomberg)

## Wall Street

NEW YORK (AP) - The Dow industrials reached a new high after flirting with 9,200 yesterday as the stock market extended a recovery from a bout of interest rate jitters.

The Dow Jones industrial average at one point was up 114.84 at 9,261.91 but gave ground at the end of the day in heavy trading. It finished with a gain of 45.59 - or 0.5 percent - at 9,192.66, surpassing the April 21 record close of 9,184.94.

Broader indicators also rose in a third straight session of big gains. Stocks stumbled a week ago on concern the Federal Reserve would try to prevent the economy from overheating by pushing up interest rates. But economic reports on Thursday and Friday reinforced a key point of the economy's extended growth streak: that inflation remains under control despite sound growth.

Union Carbide led the Dow's advance after a British newspaper reported that the chemical maker had spurned a merger bid by British Petroleum.

British and Asian markets were closed for holidays

## Mark little changed after European Bank compromise

The dollar was little changed against the mark on speculation a compromise agreed to over the weekend on who will head the European Central Bank may undermine the ECB's credibility.

In the accord reached at their Brussels summit, European Union leaders nominated former Dutch central banker Wim Duisenberg as ECB president. He will retire before his eight-year term expires to make way for France's Jean-Claude Trichet.

The compromise, designed to placate France, reversed gains the mark made last week amid optimism for a timely and stable start to Europe's single currency. The yen, British pound and Swiss franc - all outside the euro bloc - rose against the mark, which will be

replaced as Europe's benchmark by the euro.

"The deal that was cut this weekend is euro bearish," said Jeremy Fand, a currency strategist at BankBoston. "The public wants a to see a happy, workable start of the EMU, but what they're getting is a fight between the French and the Germans."

The dollar was little changed at 1.7812 marks from 1.7836 marks Friday in New York. It fell to 133.14 yen from 133.44 yen.

Versus other currencies, the mark fell to 74.705 yen from 74.865 yen and to 0.8362 Swiss francs from 0.8373 francs Friday. Sterling rose to 2.9704 marks from 2.9669 marks. Some traders sold marks on concern that future ECB decisions may be based more on political

## CURRENCIES

Dollar	3.098	+0.24%
Mark	2.0717	+0.5%
Sterling	6.1688	+0.2%

## COMMODITIES

Gold	\$304.25	+2.0%
Crude Oil	\$15.74	+0.39%
CRB	224.79	+0.13%

## Others

Corn	1.75	+0.05
Wheat	1.75	+0.05
Soybeans	1.75	+0.05

## BONDS

US 30-year T-bill	5.93	no change
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## US 30-year T-bill yield

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## Energy

Crude oil for June delivery fell as much as 39 cents, or 2.4 percent, to \$15.74 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Prices rose Friday on speculation that Mexico's Energy Secretary Luis Telles and his Venezuelan counterpart, Erwin Arieta, would meet over the weekend with Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Ali Naimi in Houston to discuss further cuts in global oil production.

While Telles and Arieta met in Mexico City Friday, there was no meeting with Naimi, and the lack

of such a meeting sent prices lower yesterday. However, according to news reports, Naimi told reporters in Washington yesterday that he would meet two ministers later this week.

In March, the three ministers forged an agreement to cut production, which eventually included 17 oil producers and with output cuts totaling 1.7 million barrels a day.

## Precious metals

Gold for June delivery rose as much as \$2.60, or 0.9 percent, to \$306.20 an ounce on the Comex

## COMMODITIES

Gold	\$304.25	+2.0%
Crude Oil	\$15.74	+0.39%
CRB	224.79	+0.13%

## Others

Corn for July delivery could rise amid expectations that rainy weather this week, particularly in the eastern Corn Belt, could delay planting of this year's crop.

Weather Services Corp. said field work and sowing progress in the Midwest would be slow, particularly from Missouri and Illinois east. July corn on the Chicago

Board of Trade is called to open 2 cents to 4 cents higher.

Hogs for June delivery were called 0.15 cent to 0.20 cent higher a pound on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange as dry weather meant farmers would spend more time planting spring crops and less time selling hogs. Hog demand typically increases during the spring because of the popularity of barbecuing. Meatpackers have increased their slaughter rate by 14 percent compared to last year to keep up with demand.

June hogs rose 1.275 cents, or 2.13%, to 61.2 cents a pound on the CME on Friday. (Bloomberg)

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June hogs rose 1.275 cents, or 2.13%, to 61.2



# Sampras wins Atlanta clay title

ATLANTA (Reuters) - Top seed Pete Sampras ended his four-year title drought on clay by holding off second seed Jason Stoltenberg of Australia 6-7 (2-7) 6-3 7-6 (7-4) in the final of the AT&T Challenge on Sunday.

Sampras, who regained the world number one ranking from Chile's Marcelo Rios last Monday, won his second ATP Tour title of the year and 54th of his career, but his first on clay since the 1994 Italian Open.

"It's nice to win a title, even though people say it's green clay and it's faster (than European red clay)," Sampras said.

"This was the slowest week of clay I've ever played. It was a great confidence builder," added the top seed who is still looking for his first French Open win, the only major title to elude him.

Sampras managed to capitalize on just two of 16 break point opportunities against Stoltenberg but wrapped up the two hour and 40 minute tussle on his first match point in the third set tiebreak.

"I don't think there was much difference, just a con-

ple of inches here or there," said Stoltenberg.

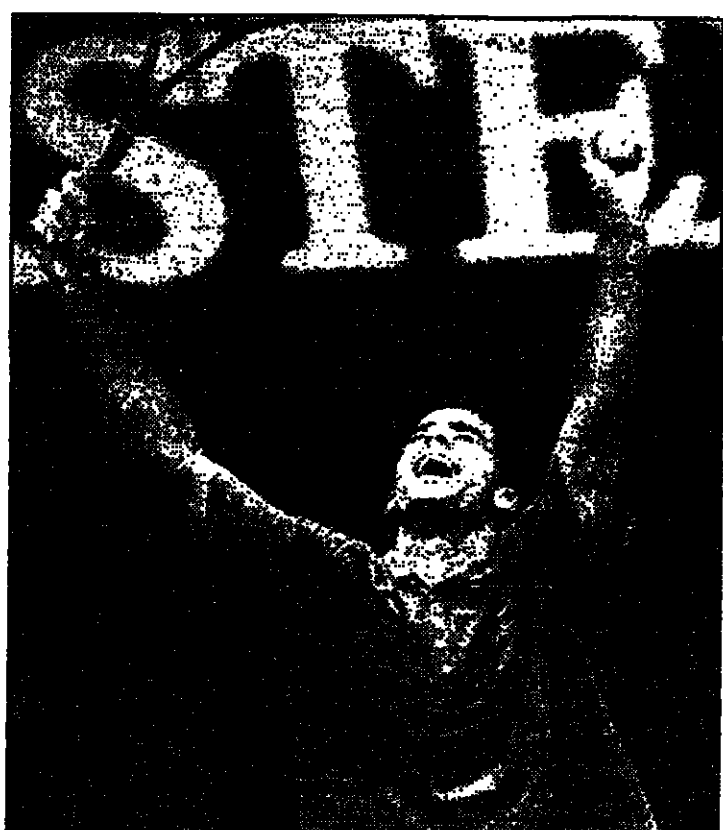
"In a match that close against him you can't say much went wrong." The 42nd-ranked Australian served 15 aces but offered up 13 double faults to finish runner-up here for the second year running.

Stoltenberg lost to Marcelo Filippini in last year's final, and also lost finals this year at Adelaide, Australia and Scottsdale, Arizona.

"It's not a bad problem to have if I keep putting myself in that position," Stoltenberg said. "I've lost matches to people who were playing better tennis at the time." Sampras came in to the tournament having lost four of his last seven matches, including an embarrassing 6-1 6-1 defeat by Fabrice Santoro on clay in Monte Carlo.

He struggled at times in the early rounds here, but battled through to meet Stoltenberg, who had not dropped a set in his march to the final.

"It was a tough week," Sampras said. "But this is the best I've played all week. It was a war out there, both of us played good tennis."



REACH FOR THE TOP - Pete Sampras has taken heart from his win in Atlanta in the hope of capturing his first French Open title. (Reuters)

## Boxer to be kept unconscious for further 48 hours

LONDON (Reuters) - British boxer Spencer Oliver, who is in a critical condition in a London hospital, will be kept unconscious for the next 48 hours to allow his condition to stabilize.

Oliver underwent brain surgery after he was knocked out on Saturday while defending his European super-bantamweight title against Ukrainian Sergei Devakov.

Surgeons removed a blood clot on the right side of his brain and consultant neurosurgeon James Palmer said the injury was potentially life-threatening.

A hospital statement said the 23-year-old boxer's condition was "critical but stable".

Oliver, the father of a two-year-old son, had won each of his previous 14 professional fights and was hoping for a world title bout before the end of the year.

A renewed call from the British Medical Association for a ban on boxing was rejected on Monday by Sports Minister Tony Banks.

"I do believe there is a case yet again to look at the way that boxing is organized," he said.

"Going for a ban is not the answer to this situation. It certainly isn't one that the government is contemplating."

## Selectors talk to Hollioake about cannabis allegations

LONDON (Reuters) - England all-rounder Ben Hollioake has spoken to two of the national selectors about an magazine article implying he smoked cannabis on the England A tour of Sri Lanka this year.

In the article, published in GQ, Hollioake is quoted as saying he was "bamboozled".

"It's not a pose man. Look at my eyes," Hollioake is reported as saying.

A spokesman for the England and Wales Cricket Board said yesterday selectors David Graveney and Graham Gooch had talked to Hollioake about the article. Gooch was the manager of the tour party.

"Nothing untoward occurred," the spokesman said. "Hollioake and other members of the A team have been reminded of their responsibilities and obligations as England cricketers."

"People can judge for themselves whether that amounts to a reprimand. We regard the matter as closed."

The article, in a popular men's magazine featuring actress Sharon Stone on this month's cover, gives a lurid account of the England team's off-the-field activities.

It claims one member of the tour party had requested pornography while another had vomited outside a cab after drinking too much at a restaurant.

Hollioake, 20, whose elder brother Adam captains the England one-day team, played one test against Australia last year.

He was one of the successes of the Sri Lanka tour, scoring his first two first class centuries in the unofficial Test series and went on to play for England in the one-day series in the West Indies.

## Inter take impressive record into UEFA final

By PADDY AGNEW

ROME (Reuters) - Inter Milan take an impressive European track record into tomorrow's all-Italian UEFA Cup final against Lazio in Paris.

In 34 seasons of European competition, Inter have twice won the European Cup and the UEFA Cup while their overall record shows that they have won 111 out of the 218 games played in all three European competitions since 1955.

The 13-times Italian champions tend to take European competition for granted, having missed out only once in the past 22 seasons.

Inter go into their second consecutive UEFA Cup final tomorrow having lost out to German side Schalke 04 in a penalty shootout in last season's final.

Inter's greatest European success goes back 34 years to a now legendary side coached by Helenio Herrera and featuring big names such as Sandro Mazzola, Giacinto Facchetti, Mario Corso and Spaniard Luis Suarez.

Significantly, all four former star players are now intimately involved in the day-to-day running of the club.

Herrera's Inter won the European Cup in successive seasons, beating Real Madrid 3-1 in the 1964 final and Portuguese champions Benfica 1-0

the following year.

That side also claimed an Intercontinental Cup double, beating Argentina's Independiente in successive and explosive finals in 1964 and 1965.

Inter had to wait a further 26 years for their next European triumph, lifting the UEFA Cup in a 1991 all-Italian final when they beat AS Roma 2-1 on aggregate.

The 1991 Inter team, winners of the Italian title two seasons previously and featuring German midfielder Lothar Matthaus, were coached by the former Juventus and current Bayern Munich coach Giovanni Trapattoni.

Not even a mid-season change of coach could stop the side winning a second UEFA Cup three years later. Giampiero Marini took over from Osvaldo Bagnoli in February 1994 but still went on to lead the side to a 2-0 aggregate win over Austrian side Salzburg three months later.

In recent seasons Inter's form in Europe has provided dramatic contrasts.

In the autumn of 1995 Inter were humiliated in a 2-1 aggregate, first round UEFA Cup elimination by Swiss minnows Lugano.

That defeat prompted coach Ottavio Bianchi's departure. He was replaced by Englishman Roy Hodgson who one year later guided Inter all the

way to that 1997 final loss to Schalke.

This season, too, has seen Inter's European form oscillate with the side struggling in second and third round ties against French opposition.

In the second round Inter were beaten 2-1 at home in the first leg of their tie with Olympique Lyon, forcing them to pull out all the stops for a 3-1 second leg away win.

In the next round Inter again left themselves an uphill struggle against Strasbourg, losing 2-0 away in the first leg before bouncing back with a 3-0 home win in the return leg.

Then came a re-run of last season's final, a difficult quarter-final clash against holders Schalke. Having won the first leg 1-0 thanks to brilliant goal from Brazilian striker Ronaldo, Inter had to wait for a first minute extra time goal by their Nigerian defender Taribo West in the second leg in Gelsenkirchen before winning their way through to the semifinal.

Against Dynamo Moscow it was once more the brilliance of Ronaldo which paved the way for their 4-2 aggregate success. The Brazilian scored both goals in the second leg win in Moscow in a game played on a treacherously muddy pitch.

Tomorrow, Inter will hope the Brazilian can strike again to give them a hat-trick of UEFA Cups in the 1990s.

## Lazio come of age to reach first European final

By GIDEON LONG

ROME (Reuters) - Lazio enter the brave new world of the UEFA Cup final tomorrow with an almost non-existent European track record but with the confidence of a team which has finally come of age.

The Rome side have never played in a European final before.

They have never even qualified for either the European Cup or the Cup Winners' Cup and have known only disappointment in their previous UEFA Cup campaigns.

But in marching past Rapid Vienna, Auxerre and Atletico Madrid to tomorrow night's Paris showdown against Inter Milan, Sven Goran Eriksson's side have suggested that they have the flair, character and youth to be a force on the European stage for seasons to come.

Lazio's UEFA Cup campaign started in spectacular style, with a 4-0 away win at Portugal's Vitoria Guimaraes which guaranteed them a place in the second round.

After brushing aside Russia's Rotor Volgograd and Rapid Vienna with 3-0 aggregate victories they met France's Auxerre in what always appeared a difficult quarter-final tie.

Lazio won the home leg 1-0 thanks to a late strike from Pierluigi Casiraghi who, despite spending much of the league season on the bench, is proving himself something of a UEFA Cup specialist - both with Lazio and previous club Juventus.

This is Casiraghi's sixth back-to-back UEFA Cup campaign and has proved his most successful to date, reaping him four goals.

Lazio drew their away match against Auxerre 2-2 and Casiraghi's

first leg goal was enough to take them through.

In the semifinals they met Atletico Madrid and again proved they are as dangerous away from home as in Rome.

Yugoslav midfielder Vladimir Jugovic scored the only goal of the match in the Spanish capital to give Lazio arguably the greatest victory of their European history to date.

A tense second leg tie in Rome ended 0-0 and Lazio were in the UEFA Cup final - the fourth to have been contested between Italian sides.

History suggests Lazio are destined for disappointment in tomorrow's clash with their formidable Serie A rivals Inter.

Before this year Lazio had never progressed further than the quarter-finals of the UEFA Cup, where they lost to Germany's Borussia Dortmund in the 1994-95 campaign.

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## Inside

Yankees  
pound  
Royals

Page 18

Sampras  
wins in  
Atlanta

Page 17

Sports Editors  
Joe Hoffman & Ori LewisKnesset  
panel  
discusses  
'match  
fixing'

By OFER RONEN-ABELS

The scandal involving Hapoel Beit She'an and Beitar Jerusalem reached the Knesset yesterday as the education committee discussed events at Kiryat Eliezer on Saturday in a stormy session.

Meanwhile, the Israel Football Association has ordered private investigations firm Modi'in Ezerah to probe events on Saturday in order to ascertain whether there is any truth to the match-fixing allegations in which Beit She'an have been accused in the media of throwing the match.

Beitar's resulting 3-2 win in injury time gives them a major advantage over Hapoel Tel Aviv as the final round of matches approaches on Saturday.

Knesset Education Committee chairman Emmanuel Zissman MK yesterday asked IFA chairman Gavriel Levy to prepare an interim report by Friday in order that the facts may be established, so that if there is a basis to the allegations, the National League can be suspended before Saturday's scheduled round of fixtures.

The chairman of both clubs joined the IFA in asking all soccer fans around the country to remain calm after three Beit She'an players complained to the police of receiving telephone threats.

Further to the plea for calm, Arieh Avnery, chairman of the National Federation of Israel Journalists, voiced his body's protest at Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert following the comments Olmert made on the radio regarding the sports media. Avnery said that "slurs" the mayor made could lead to violence against journalists.

Following the as yet unexplained 10-minute delay in Saturday's kick-off at Kiryat Eliezer, the IFA announced yesterday that four crucial games would be played on Saturday. The fixtures involving teams fighting to avoid relegation will kick off at exactly 17:00 while those involving the top two teams would kick off at exactly 17:50.

The IFA will open a situation room in order to supervise that kick-offs of not only the first, but also of the second halves of the games start simultaneously.

Interest in the capital is intense and some 7,000 tickets have already reportedly been sold for Beitar's last home game against Maccabi Petah Tikva at Teddy Stadium on Saturday.

Man Utd beat  
Leeds to lessen  
title blow

LONDON (Reuters) — Manchester United eased some of their pain at relinquishing the English premier league title by comfortably beating Leeds United 3-0 at Old Trafford yesterday.

Ryan Giggs, Denis Irwin and David Beckham were on target as United lifted their points tally with one game left to go, still four adrift of champions Arsenal.

A miserable day for Leeds was completed when Norwegian defender Gunnar Halle was sent off for a second bookable offence after 63 minutes.

Weissman Giggs opened the scoring after just six minutes, coaching a rare headed goal following superb work down the right from Gary Neville.

It was 2-0 after 32 minutes. England striker Teddy Sheringham was fouled in the Leeds' area and Irish full-back Irwin stepped up to send the Yorkshire side's goalkeeper Nigel Martyn the wrong way from the resultant penalty.

England midfielder Beckham completed United's stroll in the May sun with a third goal on the hour mark, volleying home sweetly with his right foot from the edge of the area.

## Jordan, Pippen smother Hornets

CHICAGO (AP) — Michael Jordan had 35 points and Scottie Pippen 25, scoring just 10 fewer than the entire Hornets team, as the Bulls pulled away in the fourth quarter to win their fourth straight playoff game and take a 1-0 lead in the Eastern Conference semifinals.

Charlotte, which led by one at the half, scored just 10 third-quarter points and finished with 32 in the second half.

The Hornets shot 36 percent for the game.

Game 2 is tomorrow at the United Center, where the Bulls are 23-1 in the postseason the last three years.

Jazz 84, Rockets 70

At Salt Lake City, Karl Malone had 31 points and 15 rebounds as the Jazz advanced to the second round of the playoffs. Greg Ostertag made it possible with seven blocked shots, five rebounds and a tenacious fourth-quarter defensive performance.

Ostertag blocked five shots in the fourth quarter alone and helped hold Hakeem Olajuwon to 1-for-5 shooting and Kevin Willis to two points in the fourth quarter. The Rockets played without Charles Barkley, out with a torn triceps muscle.

Utah, which holds home-court advantage throughout the playoffs, avoided becoming just the second No. 1 seed to lose an opening-round playoff series. The Jazz will meet the San Antonio Spurs in the conference semifinals starting Tuesday in Salt Lake City.

Knicks 98, Heat 81

In Miami, there was a knockout punch and a victory borne of revenge, all rolled into one haymaker of a game.

The New York Knicks took control early, withstood all the fight the Heat had left in them and cold-cocked Miami out of the playoffs with a 98-81 victory over the Heat on Sunday in Game 5 of their first-round series.

The Knicks, who wanted to avenge the disastrous ending to the 1996-97 season in the same building where they sealed their own fate by leaving the bench in a



FINDING A WAY THROUGH — Michael Jordan looks for an opening around Charlotte's Dell Curry during the Eastern Conference semi final on Sunday. (Reuters)

Game 5 brawl, accomplished exactly what they set out to do. And now they're in the second round against the Indiana Pacers.

The victory made easier by the absence of Miami's Alonzo Mourning, who was suspended along with Larry Johnson and Chris Mills of the Knicks for a fight at the end of Game 4. But it

was no walkover, either.

New York withstood a 21-3 run that turned a 20-point lead into a two-point game with 7:16 remaining in the fourth.

"We had some good shots," Allan Houston said. "We just weren't making shots. But we knew eventually if we stayed poised that we would make those

shots." The Knicks answered back almost instantly with a 19-7 run that left Heat fans heading to the exits before the clock even ticked inside two minutes.

"We kept our heads even though they cut the lead down," John Starks said. "We kept our composure. Houston scored 30 points,

Starks scored 22, Charles Oakley had 18 and Charlie Ward hit a crucial 3-point shot that killed Miami's rally.

Ward also had 14 assists and five steals, and Buck Williams had 12 points and 14 rebounds as New York took advantage of Mourning's absence to dominate inside.

Tim Hardaway led Miami with 21 points, but he was not a factor for long stretches. The Heat was outscored 43-34 and shot just 14-for-25 at the line.

It was 47-31 at halftime and Miami was getting nothing from Hardaway, who was 1-for-7 from the field and 0-for-4 from 3-point range.



STORMING AHEAD — Runners set off on the half-marathon route yesterday. (Isaac Harari)

Zvadia, Abramski take honors  
in Jerusalem Half Marathon

By HEATHER CHAIT

Yesterday's sweltering temperatures which reached 34 degrees Celsius did little to ease the notorious hilly stretches of the Sixth Jerusalem Half Marathon.

The winner of the 21.1 kilometer race, Wodag Zvadia, 25, spoke for most of the 4,000 runners, summing up the race as "very hot." Zvadia, this year's local winner of the Tiberias Marathon, finished the distance in one hour, six minutes and 23 seconds, outside his personal best of 1:04:47. He beat fellow Ethiopian immigrant Assaf Bimro who clocked 1:07:36 by over one minute.

The two runners set off at their own pace away from the rest of the 600 runners in the half marathon but at the 14km mark,

Bimro slackened, allowing Zvadia to proceed unchecked. "My run was excellent," said Zvadia while receiving his post-race massage, "and a good test for the European Championships in Budapest in August." Taking third place was Shai Fifman in 1:15:55.

The women's title went to Nili Abramski, 28, for her third successive win, in a time of 1:17:03. Ety Eimer was second in 1:21:31 with Orna Blau third in 1:23:06. Abramski was quick to praise race officials, singling out the abundance of water spots and the clear signposting.

Zvadia and Abramski each received NIS 4,500.

Running barefoot even in the boiling conditions was Lutfia Juma'a, the 18-year-old Beduin from a village near Nahariya

who covered the distance in 1:44:51, finishing seventh among the women and second among the juniors.

This year's route included a pit-stop at the Knesset grounds where Speaker Dan Tichon was on hand to welcome the runners. While one runner, apparently suffering from the heat, greeted Tichon as "Hello, Minister," another runner quipped that "it's much easier to run for the Knesset!"

One of the unusual sights in the race was juggler Raphael Harris, who juggled three balls while running the entire route, while he may have practised his juggling skills, he may have to do a little more work on his running, as he was one of the last to finish, in three hours, 45 minutes.

## Qualifier Okun upsets Radulescu at Eisenberg tourney

By ORI LEWIS

Israeli qualifier Noam Okun caused the upset of the day yesterday as the \$50,000 Eisenberg Jerusalem Challenger got under way.

Okun beat Germany's No. 2 seed, Alex Radulescu, No. 156 in the ATP rankings, in a thrilling contest for a 7-6(8), 7-6(4) win over his favored opponent.

Another Israeli, veteran Oren

Motessell needed three sets to overcome Grant Doyle of Australia 3-6, 6-2, 6-3.

In another upset, Razvan Sabau of Romania beat No. 5 seed Stefano Pescosolido of Italy 6-3, 6-3, while qualifier Julian Knowle of Austria overcame Australia's Steven Randjelovic 7-6(5), 7-5.

In the only other singles match yesterday, No. 7 seed, David Nankin of South Africa beat Israel's wild-card entry Nir Welgreen 2-6, 6-4, 6-3.

The bulk of first-round matches will be played today with top seed Peter Tramacchi of Australia (128) taking on Gabriel Trifu of Romania at 13:00.

Also in action will be Israel's Davis Cup team members, Eyal Erlich, Eyal Ran, Noam Behr and Amir Hadad.

Matches at the Israel Tennis Center at the capital's Katamon neighborhood begin at 13:00, entry is free.

New York 23 27 23 28-86  
Miami 15 18 30 29-81  
NEW YORK (81) Houston 11-23 6-9 30, Oakley 8-13 2-8 18, Cummings 2-4 1-2 5, Starks 8-15 1-2 22, Ward 3-4 0-7, B. Williams 3-7 6-8 12, Childs 1-7 0-2, Bowie 1-1 0-2. Totals 37-74 18-22 86.  
MIAMI (81) Houston 5-18 3-4 14, Brown 8-11 2-7 18, Caldwell 0-0 0-0, Leonard 2-6 2-3 7, Hardaway 8-20 2-11, Murrells 1-7 3-4 6, Conner 1-1 0-2, T. Mills 1-2 2-4, Starks 4-9 1-2 9, Totals 30-70 14-25 81.  
3-Point goals: New York 6-16 (Starks 5-9, Ward 1-2, Childs 0-1, Houston 0-3), Miami 7-22 (Hardaway 3-10, T. Mills 1-2, Murrells 1-3, Conner 1-3, Leonard 1-4). Fouled out: Murrells, Rebounds-New York 49 (B. Williams 14), Miami 43 (Brown 10), Assists-New York 28 (Ward 14), Miami 18 (Hardaway 9). Total fouls-New York 26, Miami 25. Technical fouls-New York 1 (B. Williams), Miami 1 (Starks). Foul shots-New York 4-16 (20), Miami 3-11 (19).

Houston 14 18 21 16-70  
Utah 21 18 22 23-84  
HOUSTON (70) Ellis 3-7 0-0 6, Wills 7-13 2-2 18, Chapman 7-19 1-4 15, Dreder 1-13 4-10 6, Malone 2-7 0-7, Hardaway 4-8 2-3 10, Buford 1-1 0-2, Price 0-0 0-0, Johnson 4-10 0-0 8, Jones 0-0 0-0 0, Rhodes 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 30-78 9-19 70.  
UTAH (84) Russell 4-11 1-2 10, Malone 12-22 7-8 31, Foster 3-6 0-0 6, Hornsack 7-9 0-15, Stockton 0-5 4-4 4, Easley 4-10 0-0 8, Osterag 2-3 2-6 6, Carr 0-3 0-0 0, Anderson 1-2 0-0 2, Morris 0-0 0-0 0, Vaughn 0-0 0-0 0, Kende 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 34-73 14-21 84.  
3-Point goals-Houston 1-13 (Malone 1-4, Ellis 0-1, Dreder 0-4, Johnson 0-3), Utah 2-8 (Hornsack 1-2, Russell 1-4, Anderson 0-1, Easley 0-2). Fouled out-Malone, Rebounds-Houston 53 (Wills 11), Utah 51 (Malone 15), Assists-Houston 13 (Ellis, Dreder, Price 3), Utah 28 (Stockton 10). Total fouls-Houston 23, Utah 18. A-19, 11 (19, 11).

Charlotte 23 15 10 22-70  
Chicago 15 22 21 25-53  
CHARLOTTE (70) Mason 1-5 4-8 9, Rice 9-25 8-25, Davis 5-9 2-4 12, Wesley 4-8 2-2 11, Phils 3-8 0-0 8, Armstrong 1-1 0-0 2, Curry 1-7 0-0 3, Reid 0-1 3-3 3, Totals 24-87 17-33 70.  
CHICAGO (53) Pippen 8-17 6-7 25, Kuko 2-4 1-2 5, Rodman 3-7 1-2 7, Harper 0-4 0-0 0, Jordan 11-26 12-14 35, Langley 0-1 0-0 0, Kerr 2-8 0-0 0, Burrell 2-6 0-1 5, Samuels 0-0 0-0 0, Brown 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 25-70 22-27 83.  
3-Point goals-Charlotte 5-18 (Phils 2-5, Wesley 1-3, Curry 1-3, Rice 1-3, Armstrong 0-1), Chicago 5-18 (Kerr 2-5, Jordan 1-3, Burrell 0-3, Pippen 1-5, Kuko 0-1, Rodman 0-1, Harper 0-1). Fouled out-Malone, Rebounds-Charlotte 49 (Davis 14), Chicago 48 (Rodman 14). Assists-Charlotte 23 (Wesley 9), Chicago 20 (Pippen, Jordan 4). Total fouls-Charlotte 23, Chicago 19. Technical fouls-Pippen, Langley, Rodman, A-23, 19, 19.

## NBA Playoffs at a glance

CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS (Best-of-7)  
EASTERN CONFERENCE: Sunday, May 3: Chicago 85, Charlotte 70, Chicago leads series 1-0.  
Monday, May 4: Los Angeles at Seattle.  
Tuesday, May 5: New York at Indiana; San Antonio at Utah.  
Wednesday, May 6: Charlotte at Chicago; Los Angeles at Seattle.  
Thursday, May 7: New York at Indiana; San Antonio at Utah.  
Friday, May 8: Chicago at Charlotte; Seattle at Los Angeles.  
Saturday, May 9: Indiana at New York; Utah at San Antonio.  
Sunday, May 10: Indiana at New York; Seattle at Los Angeles; Chicago at Charlotte; Utah at San Antonio.  
Tuesday, May 12: Charlotte at Chicago; San Antonio at Utah; Los Angeles at Seattle.  
Wednesday, May 13: New York at Indiana.  
Thursday, May 14: Sunday, May 17: Further games if necessary.

Wenger's perfect blend brings  
Premiership title to Arsenal

By MIKE COLLETT

LONDON (Reuters) — Arsenal made mathematically certain of the English premier league title by beating Everton 4-0 on Sunday — but they won the psychological battle to become champions on March 14 at Old Trafford.

Their 1-0 victory against holders Manchester United on a late goal from Dutchman Marc Overmars not only gave the Gunners a double over United this season — they lost twice to their last season — it also proved Arsenal had what it took to take their crown.

At the end of February, United were 12 points ahead of Arsenal but that match was the turning point. By the end of March Arsenal were only three points behind and by the middle of April they were ahead.

As United continued to falter by dropping points to Liverpool and Newcastle, Arsenal were unstoppable, steamrolling their way through the field.

The victory over United came three days after they had won 1-0 at Wimbledon, the start of their magnificent 10-match unbeaten run which could be extended further with away wins over Liverpool and Aston Villa in their last two matches.

Now with the title secured for the first time since 1991 and for the 11th time in their history, Arsenal have their sights fixed on the league and cup double.

They meet Newcastle United in the FA Cup final on May 16.

On current form, Arsenal are set to

repeat their double of 1971 when, in similar style, they came from behind to beat Leeds in the league and wrapped up the cup with victory over Liverpool at Wembley.

Arsenal's championship is a victory on many levels. French coach Arsene Wenger, who joined the club in September 1996 and so has won the title in his first full season in charge, has created a well-balanced side grafting continental Dutch and French style and flair on to Arsenal's traditional defensive impregnability.

In becoming the first foreign manager to win the English title in the competition's 109-year history, he has answered all the critics who greeted him with cries of "Arsene Who?" when he arrived from Grampian Eight in Japan.

His first job was to steady a ship that was still rocking after the traumatic departure of revered coach George Graham following his involvement in an unauthorized payment scandal, the unhappy tenure of short-lived coach Bruce Rioch and periods of instability under caretaker managers.

There were widespread reports of dressing room unrest with new overseas players like Dutchman Marc Overmars and Frenchmen Emmanuel Petit, Patrick Vieira and Nicolas Anelka not even speaking to their English team-mates.

"I did not create a revolution at Highbury," Wenger says.

"The club had won many titles and honors before and I was not about to change everything the club stood for.

"But I have created a new feeling, a mix of the foreign and English players. They adapted and I adapted to create a new understanding.

"I have helped of course, but this is down to the players.

They had the spirit and the belief to win. I have never known team spirit like it in my career." The central axis of the team, Vieira and Petit have been outstanding in midfield, while up front Dutchmen Dennis Bergkamp, who has just been named England's Footballer of the Year, and Overmars, have destroyed defences and scored almost at will.

The absence of crowd favorite Ian Wright with an injury since January has, ironically, given Arsenal greater fluidity and more scoring options. Wright returned for the last 18 minutes of Sunday's match against Everton, ironically, while Bergkamp has been sidelined with a hamstring injury which could keep him out of the Cup Final.

"In September and October we had the feeling that if Dennis or Ian didn't score, we couldn't win games," said Wenger. "But after that the team improved a lot tactically and we could win even without them. The whole collective expression of the team improved."

Another key factor has been the outstanding form of skipper Tony Adams, a reformed alcoholic who said after Sunday's win: "I don't remember anything much about our championships in 1989 and 1991 — I am certainly going to remember this one," he said.

15:50